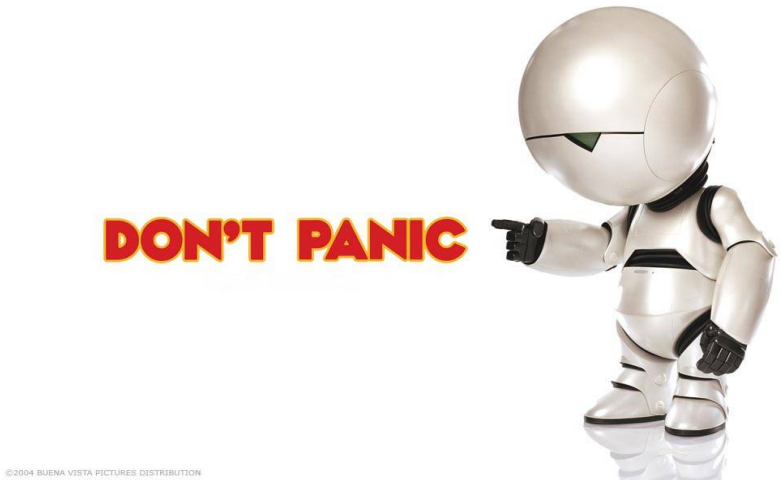

Don't Panic: The Hitchhiker's Guide to First Opening the Neverwinter Nights 2 Toolset

“Eaaergh! Look at all the buttons. Where do I start? Where do I start? OK ... let me try to create an area, and place down a building ... No! Now I've got a barn stuck to my cursor! Get off! Get off! How do I move the camera? Aaargh! Enough barns already ...”

This was my first experience of the Neverwinter Nights 2 Toolset. I jotted this guide down quickly in the hope of easing the transition for others.

It is written with the idea that anyone, no matter whether they have prior experience with the Neverwinter Nights 1 Toolset, or any other building experience, and whether or not English is your first language.

This guide is **very basic** and assumes no knowledge.

If you have any feedback on this guide at all, if it was helpful or if you have any suggestions on how to improve it, please email me at gilthonym@aanet.com.au

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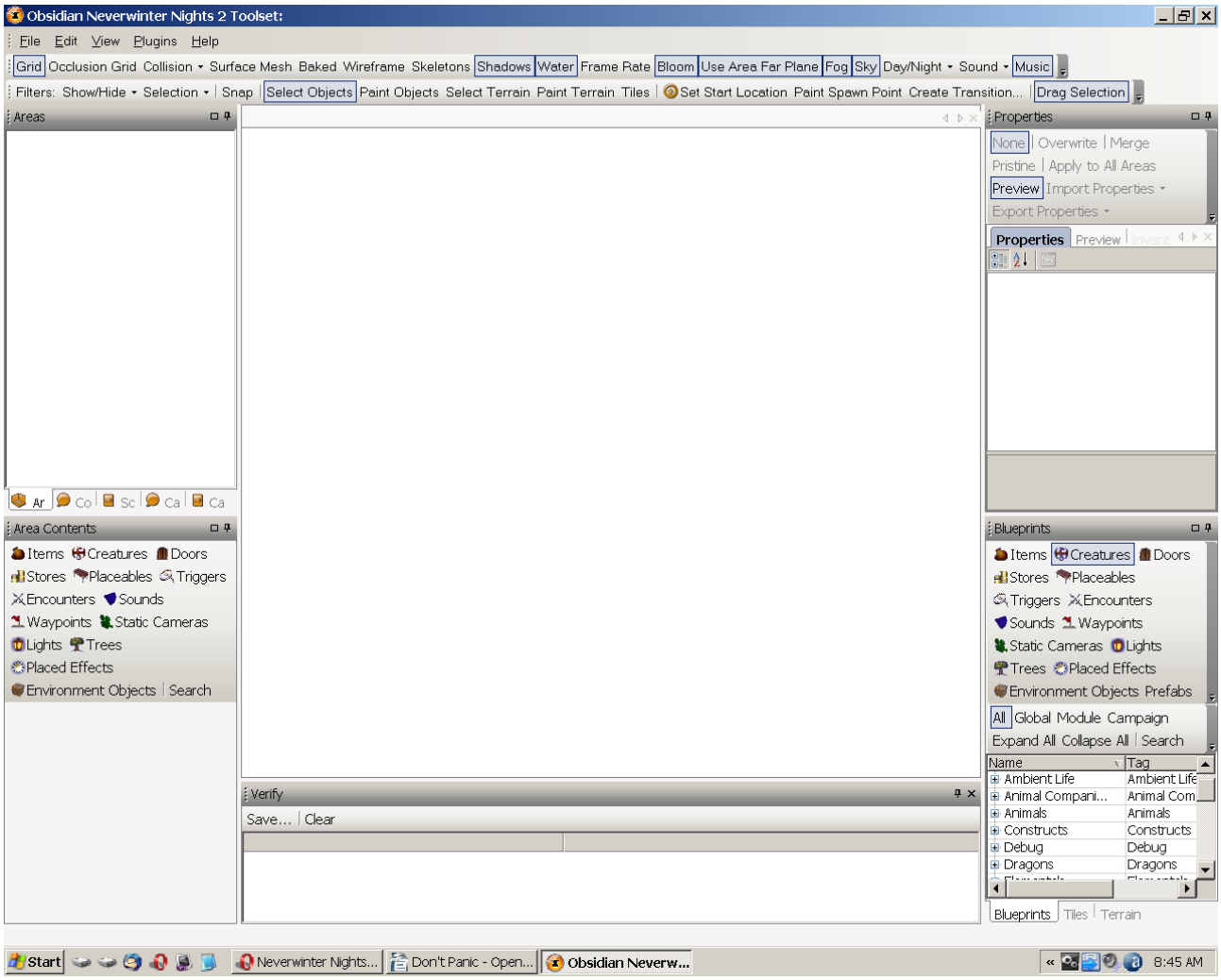
Session 1

1.1 The interface.

OK, so when you first start it up, your screen will look like this:



Let me reiterate:

There's a few things to note about this screen.

That big white area in the middle is where you view the areas that you create ('**areas**' are the different places in your adventure, linked with transitions. The full adventure is called a '**module**').

At the top you have a couple of menus and two rows of buttons. Some of these are mini-menus, others are just on/off buttons. These can be customised, but not just yet...

To either side of the window you have boxes for different tasks:

The top left box is what will be your list of areas. Look at the tabs below this box ... by clicking on the different tabs, you can change this list to show the conversations in your module, or the scripts in your module (also Campaign Scripts and Campaign Conversations, but they are for much later).

Below that is a box that shows what is currently in the area you are working on. By clicking on one of the headings (like 'Items') it will show you the items in the area.

In the middle bottom is a 'console', where messages from the toolset will appear (usually telling you something's gone wrong). The 'Save' button there is to save the messages, NOT your module.

Now, on the right of the big white area we have a properties box. This is used for displaying properties of something. For example, if you click on the menu heading 'View' and 'Module Properties', some stuff that probably won't make much sense appears in this box (It is actually a way of adding general scripts that affect the whole module, and other advanced stuff like that).

Below that, in the bottom right corner is the Blueprints box which is where you go to place things down in an area. Again, there are different buttons here depending on what it is you want to place down. This is the **fun** part!

But first ... you can't use any of this until you have created an area.

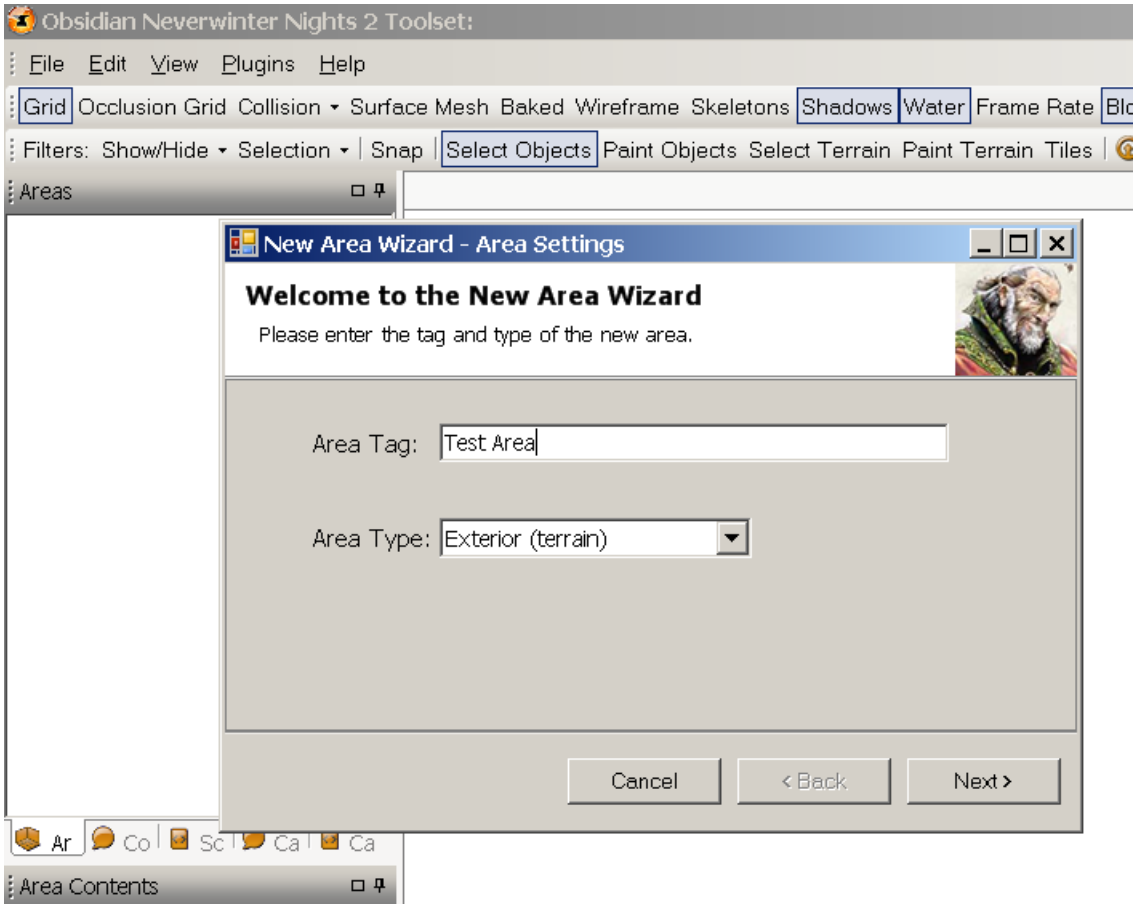
1.2 Create an area

When you open the toolset, you'll find it has already opened up a blank module for you to start work on immediately. So the first thing you might want to do is create your first area.

To do this, go to File > New > Area

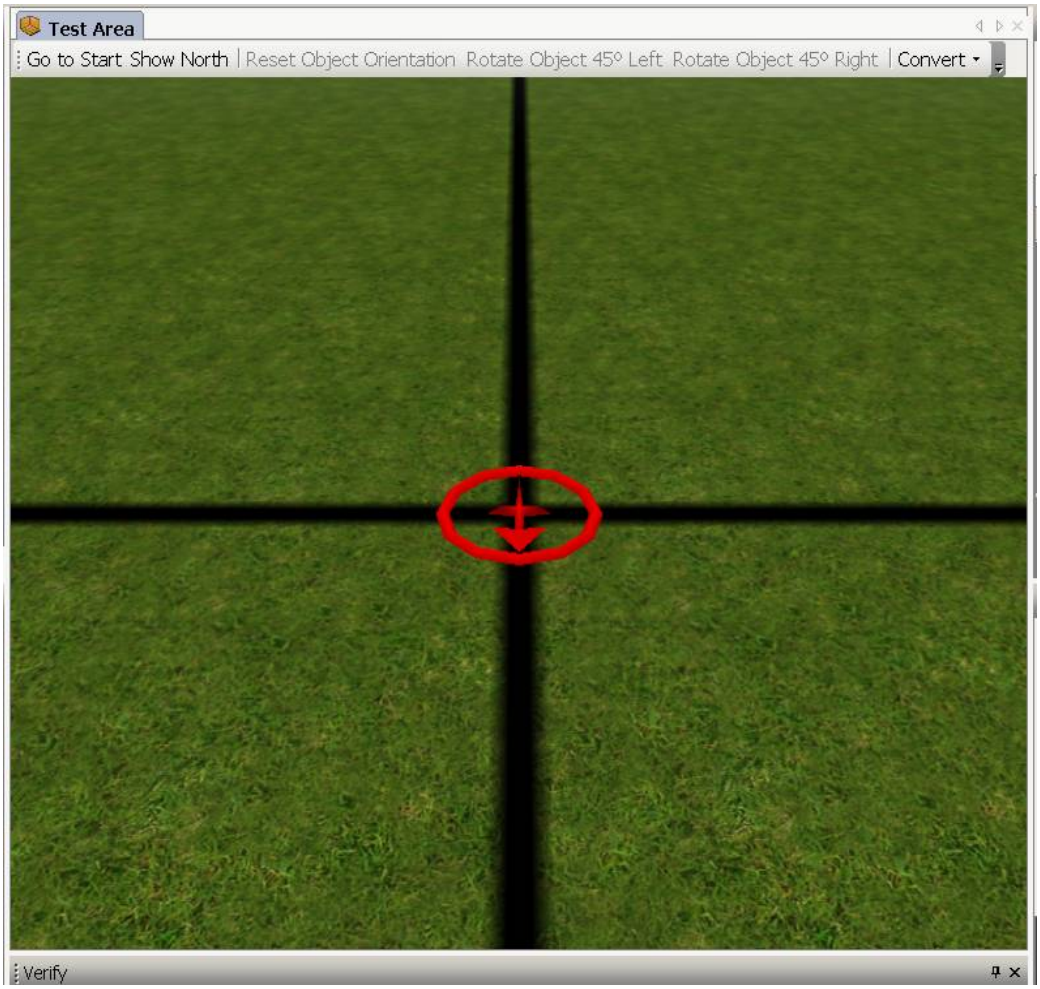
You can call the area whatever you like. I'm going to call it 'Test Area'.

For now, to follow the guide, keep it on the default area type: Exterior (terrain):

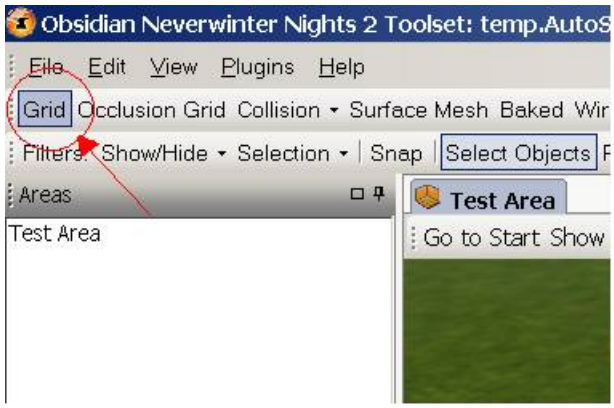

Obsidian Neverwinter Nights 2 Toolset:
File Edit View Plugins Help
Grid Occlusion Grid Collision Surface Mesh Baked Wireframe Skeletons Shadows Water Frame Rate
Filters: Show/Hide Selection Snap Select Objects Paint Objects Select Terrain Paint Terrain Tiles
Areas
New Area Wizard - Area Settings
Welcome to the New Area Wizard
Please enter the tag and type of the new area.
Area Tag: Test Area
Area Type: Exterior (terrain)
Cancel
< Back
Next >
Area Contents

Click 'Next'. To keep things manageable, keep it on the default size, 'Small'. Then click 'Finish'.

You should now see a picture of this area in the middle of your screen:



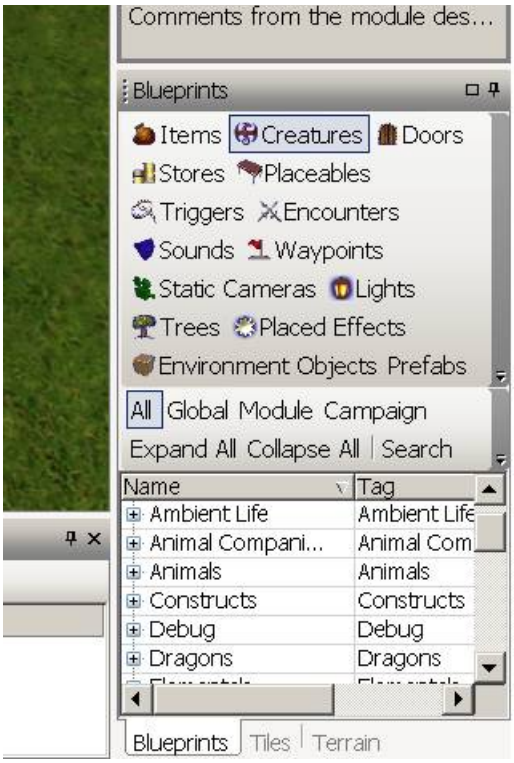
The next thing you may or may not want to do (depending on your taste) is get rid of the grid. To do this, click on 'Grid' in the top left of your screen. The grid should disappear.


Obsidian Neverwinter Nights 2 Toolset: temp.AutoS
File Edit View Plugins Help
Grid Occlusion Grid Collision Surface Mesh Baked Wir
Filters Show/Hide Selection Snap Select Objects
Areas
Test Area
Test Area
Go to Start Show

Note: Before you do this, take a look at the white lines in the grid. This is the boundary of your area. Anything you make outside of these white lines will just be background, and the player won't actually be able to go there.

1.3 Put something in your area

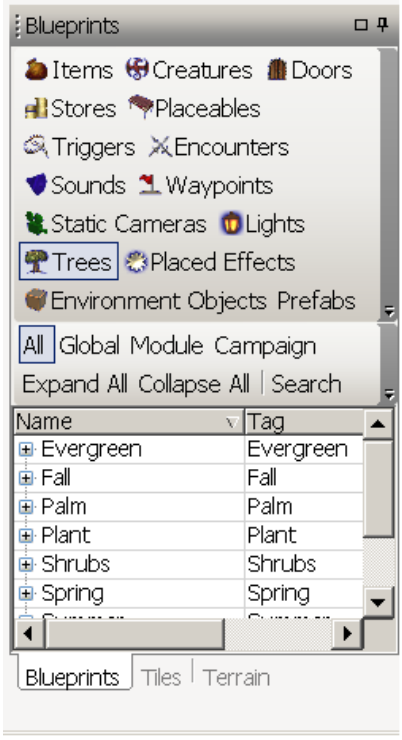
The next fun thing to do is place something in your area. To do this, look at the 'Blueprints' box in the bottom right of your screen:



Firstly, notice the tab down the bottom: it's currently set to 'Blueprints', but you can see that you can also select 'Tiles' and 'Terrain'. They will be fun later on.

But now, select 'Trees', because trees are soothing.

What you'll first be confronted with is a little dinky window where you can barely see the options:



This is no good. What you'll notice, though, is that all this little windows can be picked up, moved, and resized.

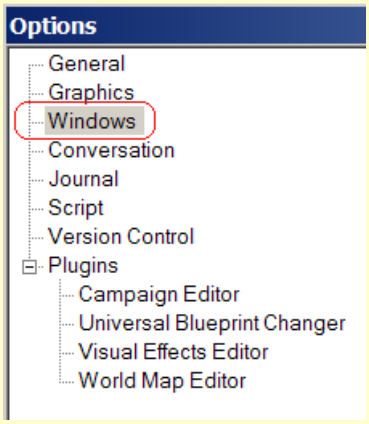
See the vertical line of dots by the title 'Blueprints'?:

Left click and drag this around to wherever you like. Then you can resize the window to your heart's content by left-click and dragging out the edges of the window.

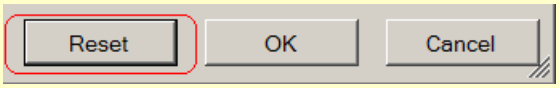
The other two icons in the title bar? Well, the square box icon to the right of the title makes it bigger. The pin icon toggles the window between a floating window and a docked toolbar type thingy. This is very nice. Perhaps don't experiment with this too much just yet, as it may kill the soothing vibe you're after.

Note: If you play around with your interface, and want to revert it to the default appearance, follow these instructions from Kana:

Click on View > Options and select 'Windows':

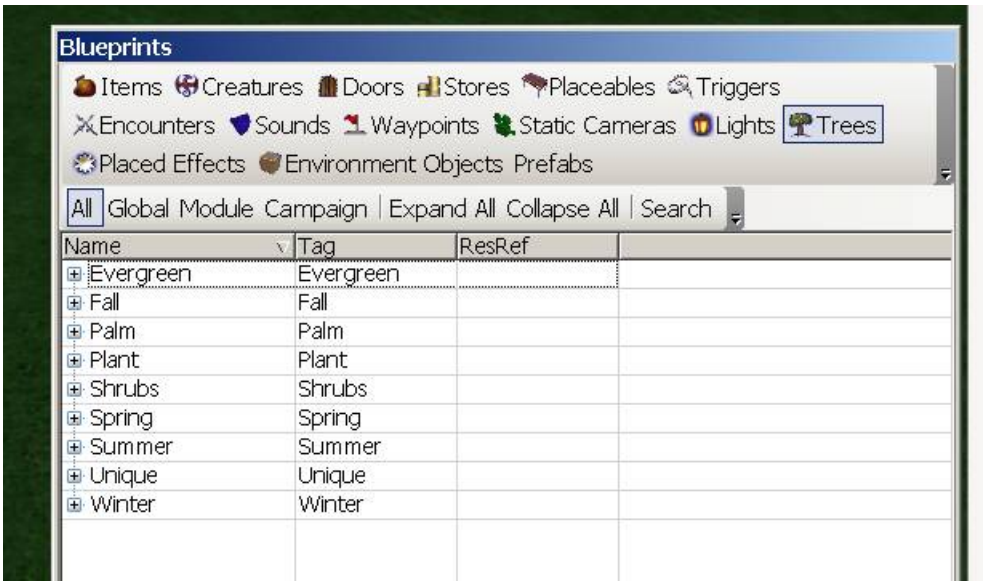


Then click on the 'Reset' button in the bottom right corner:

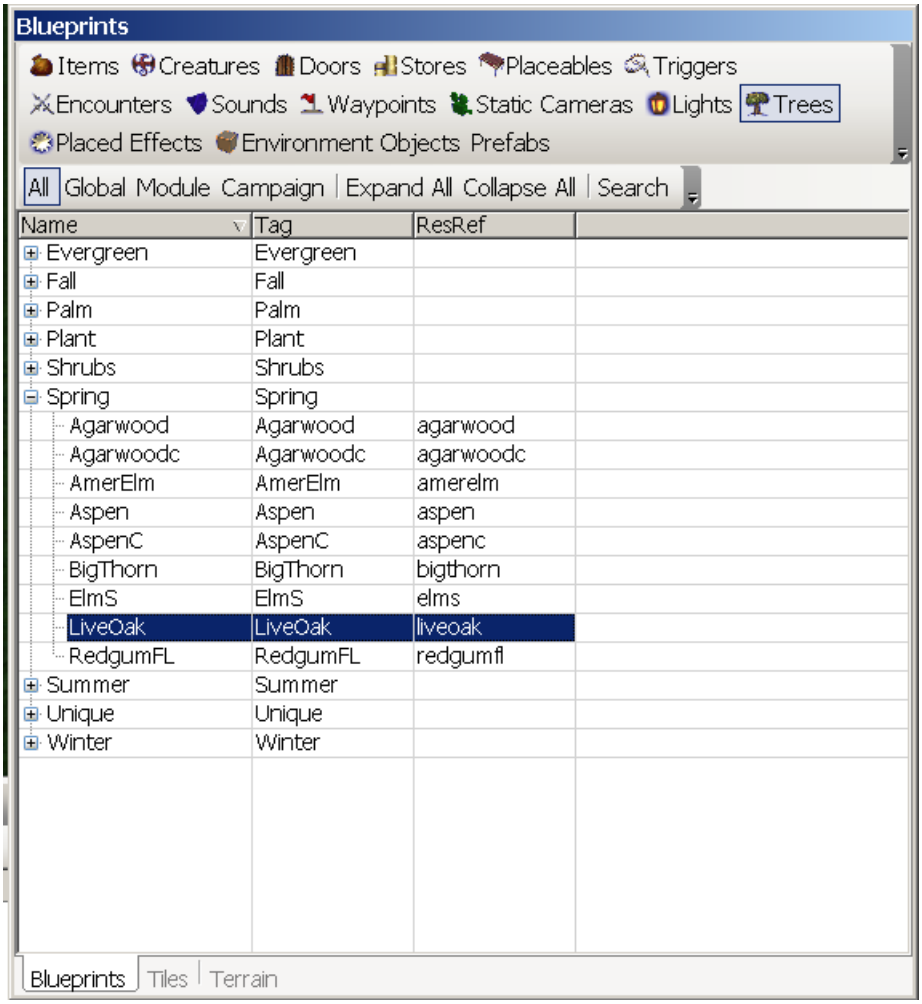


Close the toolset and re-open it and your windows will have been reset. (Thanks for that tip Kana!)

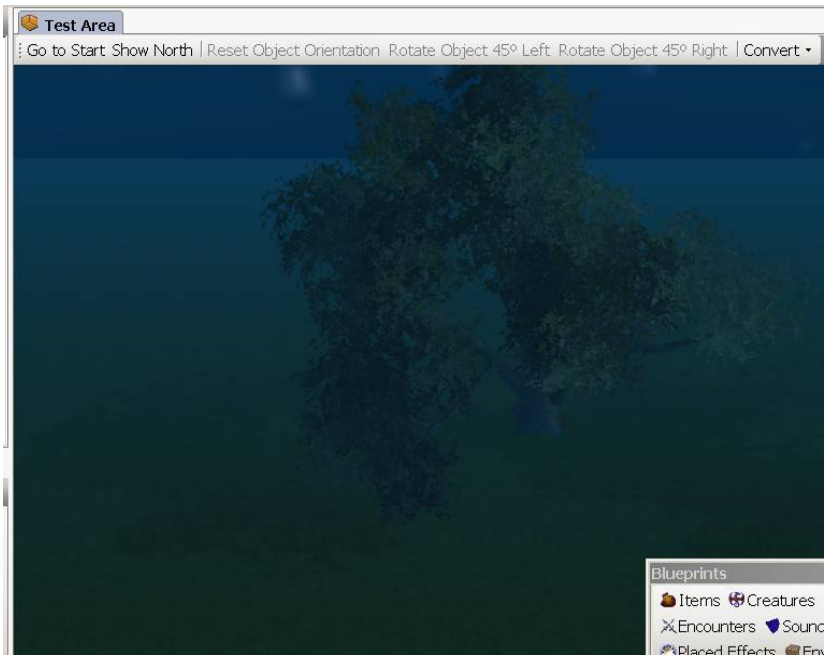
My 'Blueprints' window now looks like this:



Let's now click on the '+' next to 'Spring'. I'm going to select the Oak tree.



Now you'll have an oak stuck to your cursor. Go on and left-click it down somewhere on the grass:


Test Area
Go to Start Show North Reset Object Orientation Rotate Object 45° Left Rotate Object 45° Right Convert
Blueprints
Items Creatures
Encounters Sounc

Now, watch it sway in the breeze. Calming, no?

To get the oak tree off your cursor, click on 'Select Objects' above the toolbar. ***Alternatively, press the 'Esc' button on your keyboard (thanks Dan and Kephisto for spotting this!).***

You'll notice that 'Select Objects' becomes highlighted, and 'Paint Objects' stops being highlighted.

The oak tree is now no longer stuck on your cursor.

> **Note:** You can't rotate these special, randomly generated trees. So ignore the 'Rotate' options that appear when you select it. I'll cover rotating other objects in a later tutorial.

1.4 Camera controls

You probably don't have the best view of your oak tree right now, so here's a good time to talk about Camera controls. For this, the CTRL button on your keyboard is your friend.

Hold down CTRL and left click and drag a spot in your area. You can push or pull the area towards or away from you, or side to side.

Hold down CTRL and right click and drag a spot in your area. You can rotate it until you get dizzy.

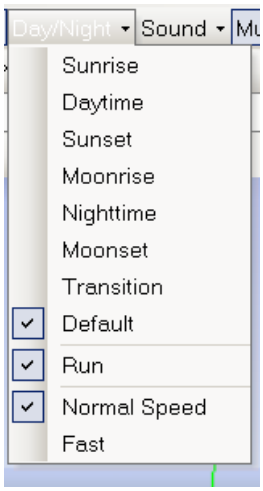
Hold down CTRL and SHIFT and left click and drag a spot in your area. You will move up and down.

To zoom in and out, roll the wheel on your mouse up or down. There doesn't appear to be an alternative if you don't have a working mouse wheel.

Get a nice view of your tree ready for the next section, which is ***very pretty***.

1.5 Day/night lighting

Now, my screenshot was a little dark, so let's play around with the lighting. Click on the Day/Night button, and you'll be given a little menu:



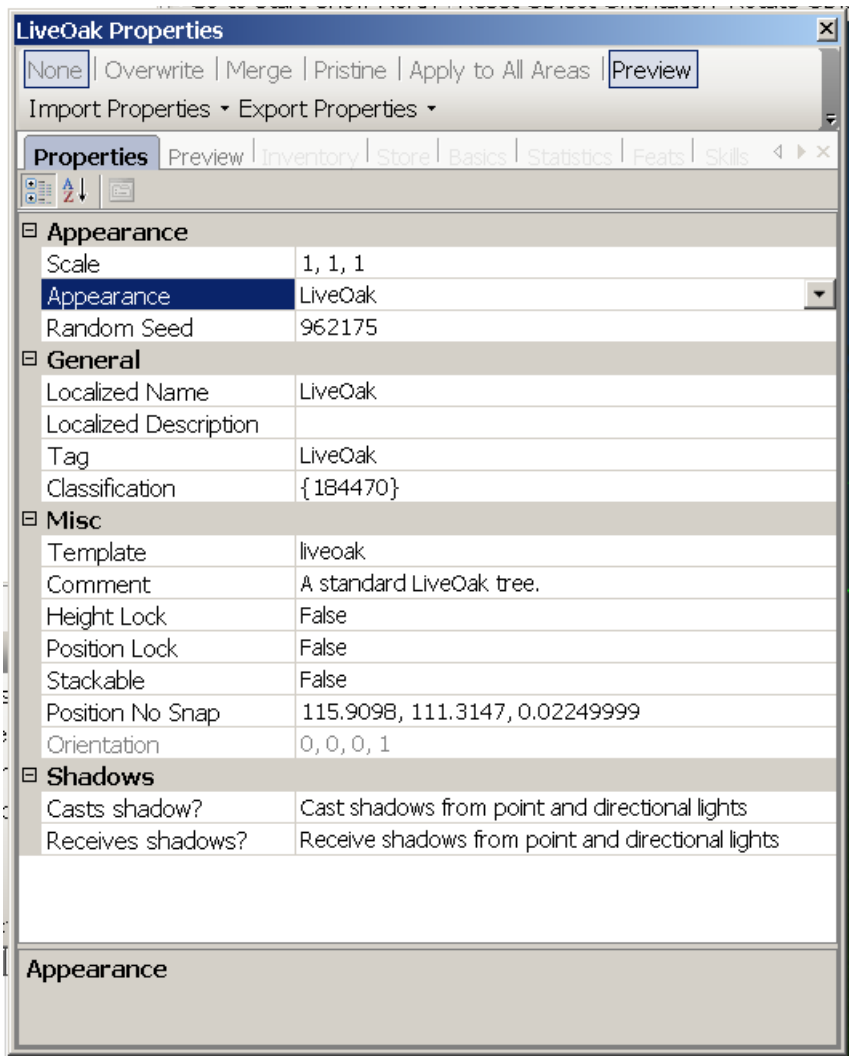
Select the different Daytime/Sunset/Moonrise options and see the different lights. Very pretty indeed.

1.6 Properties

Everything you put in your module has properties. This is where you really get down to the hard and rewarding stuff, like tinting and attaching scripts.

To look at what they are, select the oak tree so there is a green box around it, right click and go to 'Properties'.

You should see something like this (I've moved and resized mine to make it bigger, like I did with the 'Blueprints' box):


LiveOak Properties
None | Overwrite | Merge | Pristine | Apply to All Areas | Preview
Import Properties ▾ Export Properties ▾
Properties | Preview | Inventory | Store | Basics | Statistics | Feats | Skills
Appearance
Scale 1, 1, 1
Appearance LiveOak
Random Seed 962175
General
Localized Name LiveOak
Localized Description
Tag LiveOak
Classification {184470}
Misc
Template liveoak
Comment A standard LiveOak tree.
Height Lock False
Position Lock False
Stackable False
Position No Snap 115.9098, 111.3147, 0.02249999
Orientation 0, 0, 0, 1
Shadows
Casts shadow? Cast shadows from point and directional lights
Receives shadows? Receive shadows from point and directional lights
Appearance

The first property, under Appearance, is 'Scale'. Try increasing one of the numbers from 1 to 3, just by typing '3' over one of the '1's. See how the tree changes size. To change it back, just change the '3' back to a '1' again. Try a fraction, like '0.5', and you'll see it makes it smaller.

'Appearance' is what it looks like – what you first selected from the blueprint. We could change the

type of tree now here if we wanted to.

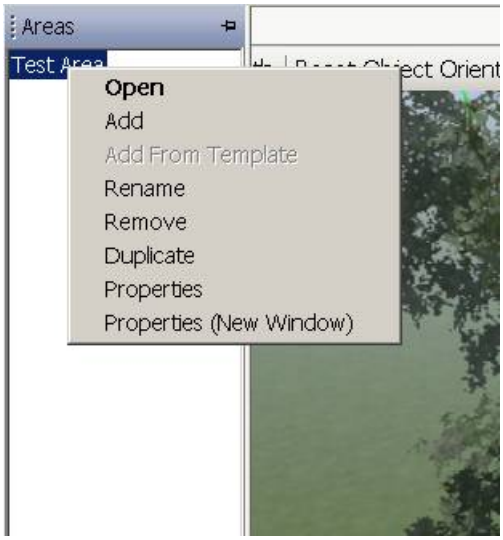
'Random seed' – try changing this number to anything, and the appearance of your tree will change. The trunk, branches and leaves of the tree are randomly generated! No more forests of identical trees! (You probably don't need to play around with this number, unless you don't like the way your tree currently looks).

> **Note:** Obsidian has recommended a maximum of five of these unique trees in one area – otherwise it will start to make the computer hurt.

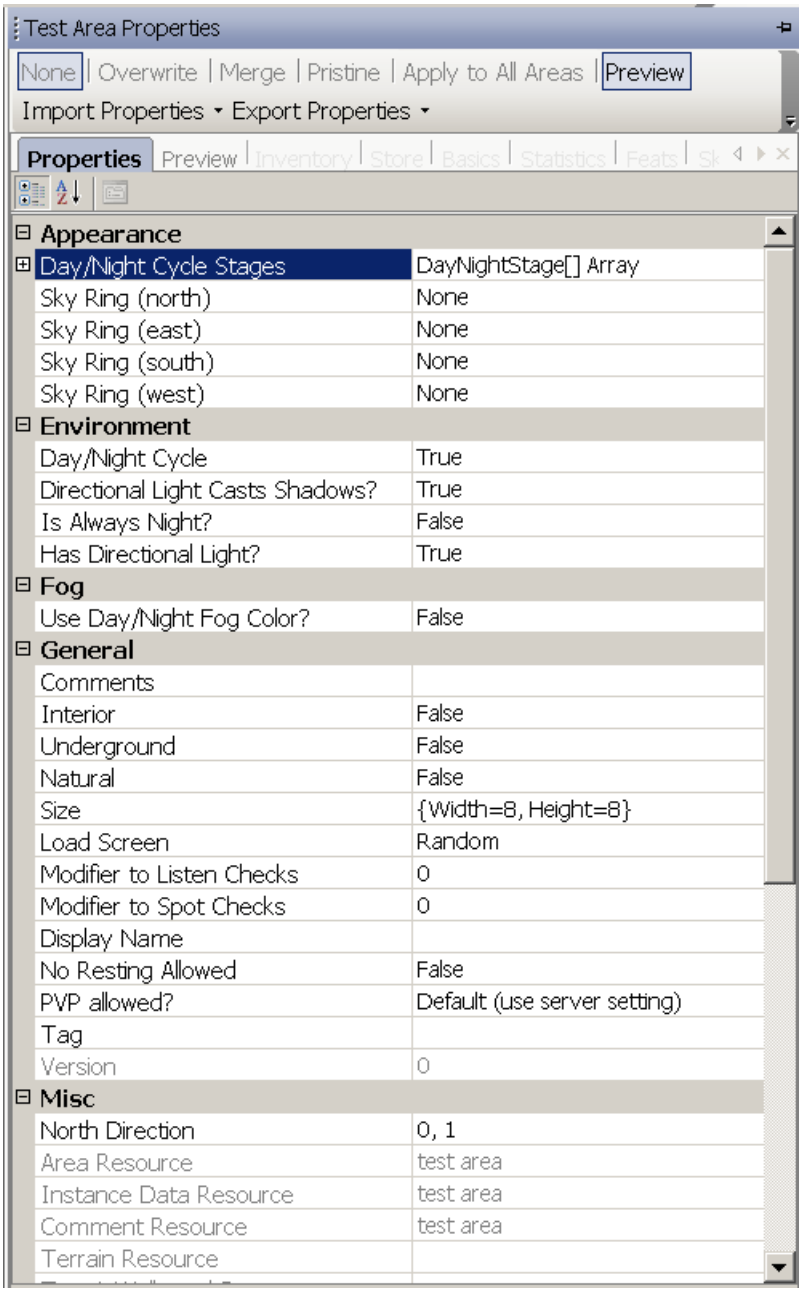
There are more options below 'Appearance', but these are more advanced, and I don't want to get into them in this tutorial.

1.7 Area properties

While we're on the topic of properties, the area you are working has its properties too. These are very powerful. To find them, look at the window with the list of your areas. Right click the name of the area you're working on, and select 'Properties (New Window)':



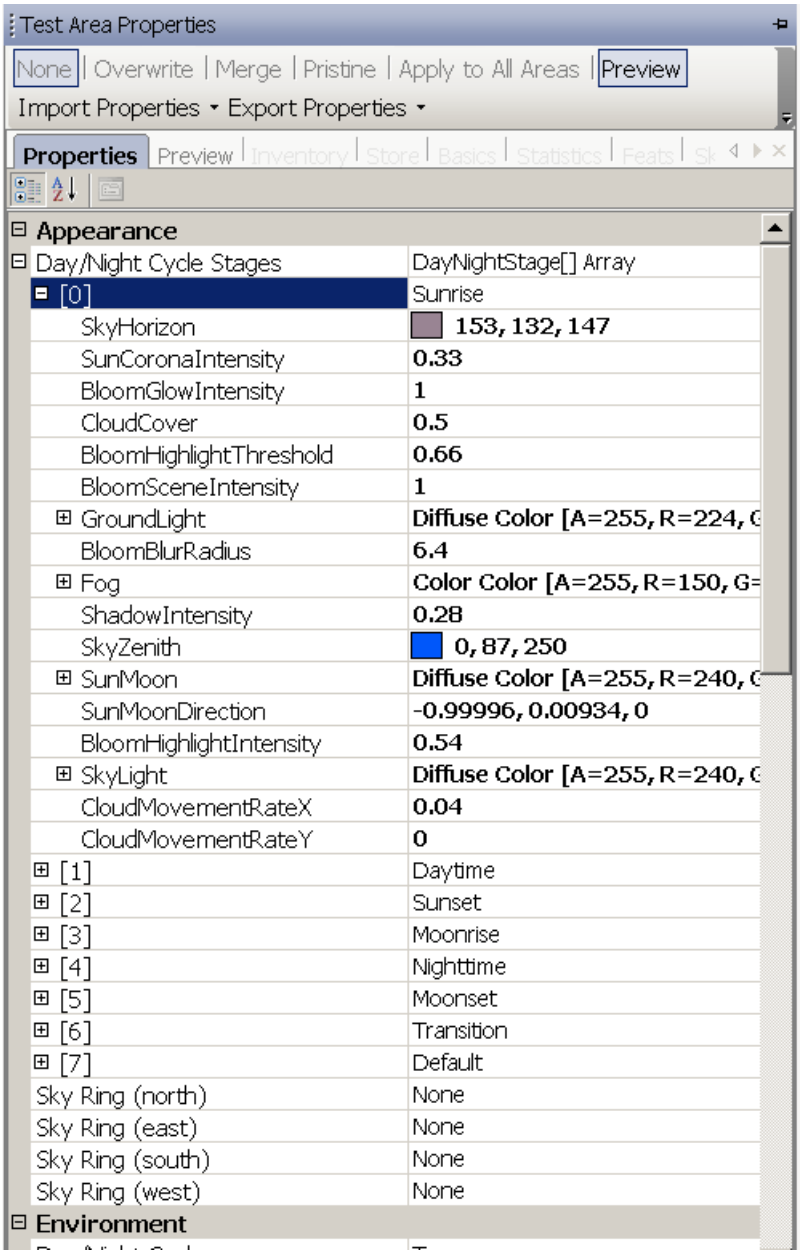
You should bring up the properties box, which looks like this:


Test Area Properties
None | Overwrite | Merge | Pristine | Apply to All Areas | Preview
Import Properties ▾ Export Properties ▾
Properties | Preview | Inventory | Store | Basics | Statistics | Feats | Sk
Appearance
Day/Night Cycle Stages | DayNightStage[] Array
Sky Ring (north) | None
Sky Ring (east) | None
Sky Ring (south) | None
Sky Ring (west) | None
Environment
Day/Night Cycle | True
Directional Light Casts Shadows? | True
Is Always Night? | False
Has Directional Light? | True
Fog
Use Day/Night Fog Color? | False
General
Comments |
Interior | False
Underground | False
Natural | False
Size | {Width=8, Height=8}
Load Screen | Random
Modifier to Listen Checks | 0
Modifier to Spot Checks | 0
Display Name |
No Resting Allowed | False
PVP allowed? | Default (use server setting)
Tag |
Version | 0
Misc
North Direction | 0, 1
Area Resource | test area
Instance Data Resource | test area
Comment Resource | test area
Terrain Resource |

Lots of stuff here! So take it slowly. We'll go through the best ones to start with here.

Appearance

Firstly, under the appearances tab, the first option is Day/Night Cycle Stages. Click on the '+' next to that. You'll open up a list like so:

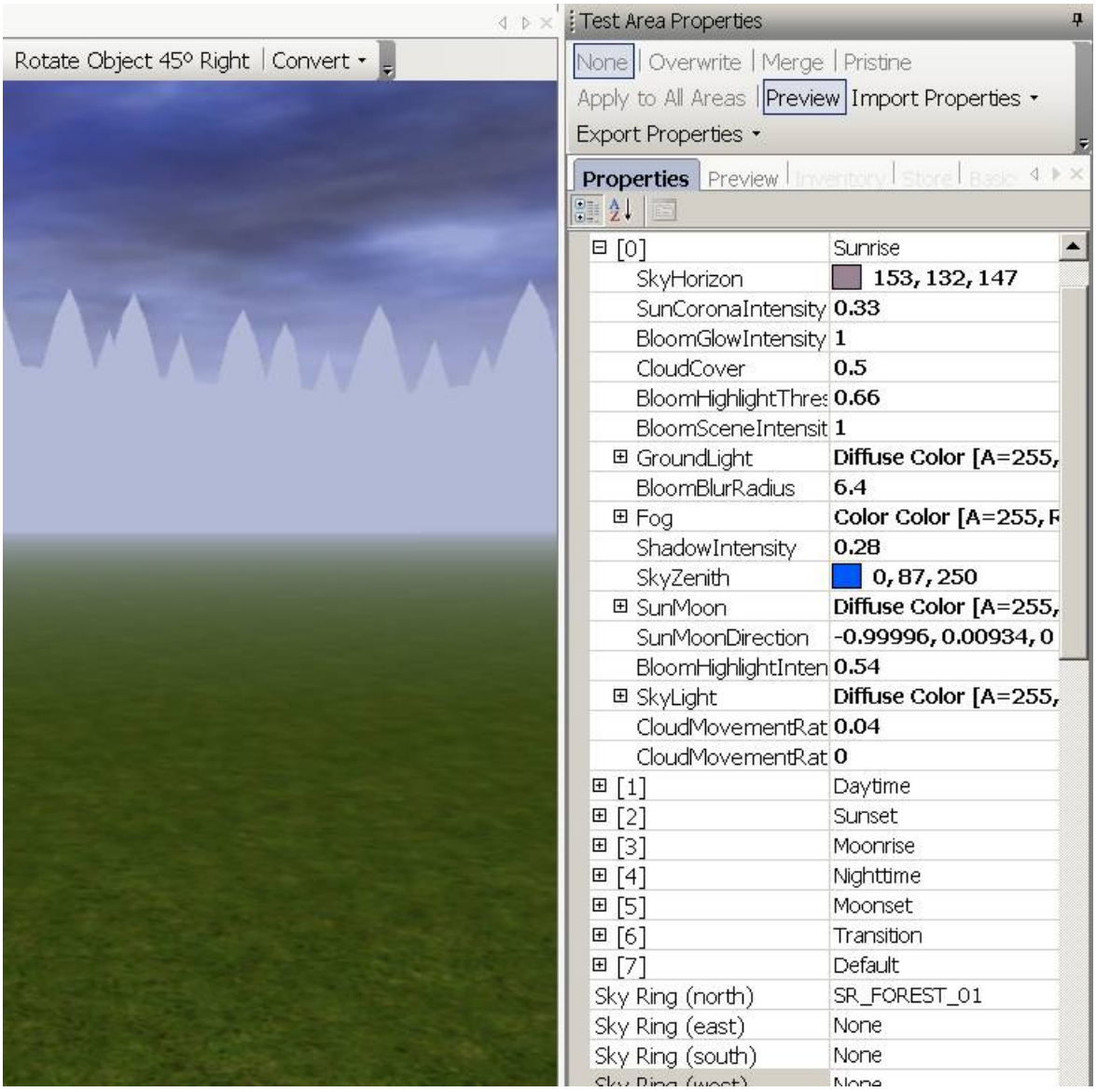


Again, **Lots** of different options that could keep you busy for hours. Basically, you can control the colour of the light, and other sky properties like clouds and fog. This is where to come if you want to play around with these things. Feel free to play around with the colours and options. I won't cover them properly here.

You can use the 'Day/Night' button to select the right period to view your results.

The next four options are 'Sky Rings' – what the horizon will look like. You can select from different options like forests and mountains.

Here I've selected one of the forest horizons for the north horizon:



You can see the silhouettes of trees when you face north. The silhouettes are the colour of fog (which you can alter in the previous part on 'Day/Night Cycle Stages').

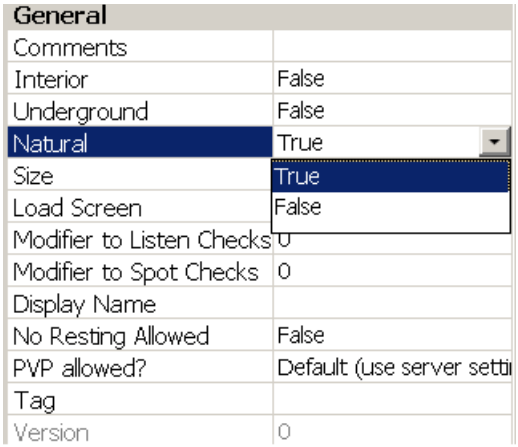
Environment

Next up is the 'Environment' options. These are yes/no questions about whether you want it to cycle between nighttime and daytime in this area and whether to use directional lights (sunlight and moonlight effects). For most outdoor areas, you'll want to leave these on their defaults.

The 'Fog' option is asking you whether to update the Fog colour from the 'Day/Night Cycle Stages' properties you set earlier. You may want to set this to true if you have changed the fog colour there.

General

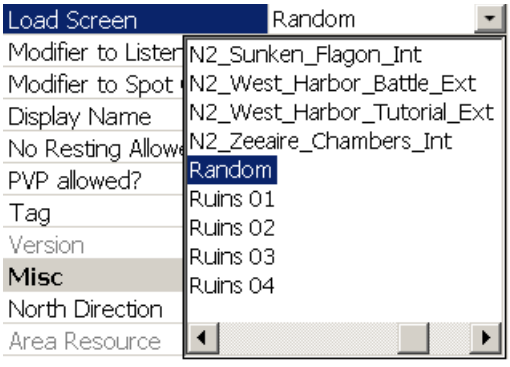
Under 'General' are a few interesting options. 'Comments' is simply for you to write yourself notes. 'Interior', 'Underground' and 'Natural' are yes/no questions about this area. You should make sure these are correct. Since we've created an outdoor natural area with an oak tree, change 'False' to 'True' for 'Natural':



The other two are correct as 'False' (it is not interior, and not underground!)

Next, 'Size' shows you the size of your area – this is what you chose at the start. Selecting this and clicking on the '...' button will allow you to resize your area, if you want to.

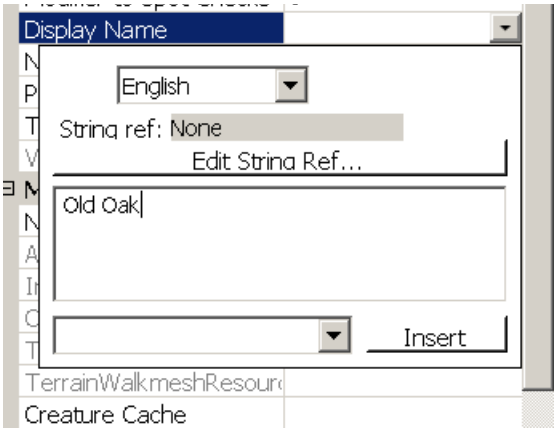
Under 'Load Screen', you can choose which load screen you want to appear for the player when they enter this area. By default it's on random:



Go ahead and change it to a load screen that sounds appropriate for the area.

'Modifier to Listen Checks' and 'Modifier to Spot Checks' lets you make it harder (or easier) for players to hear or see approaching monsters in this area.

'Display Name' – give your area an interesting name! This will appear when the area is loading. I'm going to call this area 'Old Oak':



OK, OK, not very interesting, I know. You could call it anything else, even something like 'Returning home ...' or 'After the battle...' for special areas.

Note if you know more than one language, you can give it names in different languages and make your module bilingual! This should be encouraged. Unfortunately, I'm very monolingual. (Don't worry about 'String ref' for now)

'No Resting Allowed' – if you want to prevent players from being able to rest in this area, set this to true. The poor players will not be able to rest to regain hit points and spells.

'PvP allowed' is asking you if you want players to be able to attack each other. So this only applies to multiplayer adventures. This is mainly useful if you wanted only one area like an arena, for example, where players could fight each other. Otherwise, 'default' is fine.

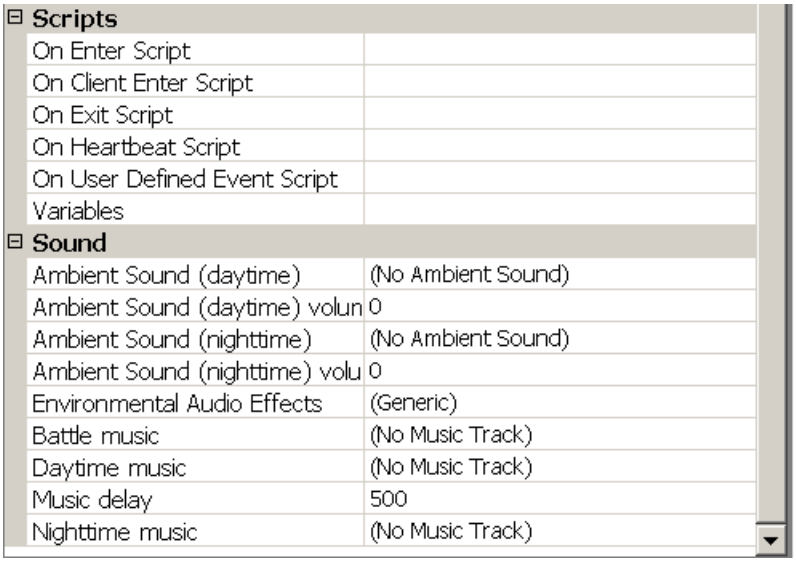
'Tag' – Tags are very important! You should give every important object (like areas, creatures, doors and any object you want players to interact with) a UNIQUE tag. Tags must be UNIQUE! So it's good to have naming conventions to make sure you don't give something the same tag. I'm going to give this area the tag 'Area_OldOak':

Unique tags let you refer to that specific object when writing scripts, or organising things like doors connecting to one another.

The 'Misc' set of options isn't very interesting, and we'll skip them.

Scripts

If you scroll down further, you'll find two more categories, 'Scripts' and 'Sound':

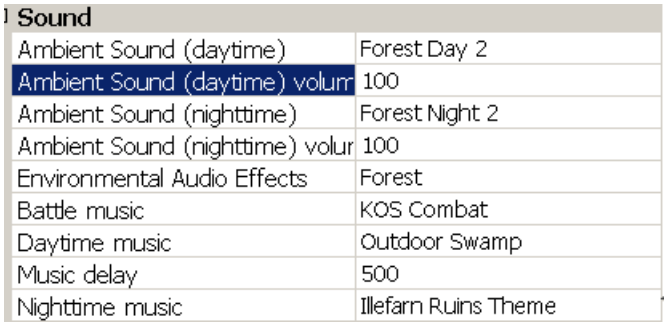


Scripts	
On Enter Script	
On Client Enter Script	
On Exit Script	
On Heartbeat Script	
On User Defined Event Script	
Variables	
Sound	
Ambient Sound (daytime)	(No Ambient Sound)
Ambient Sound (daytime) volun	0
Ambient Sound (nighttime)	(No Ambient Sound)
Ambient Sound (nighttime) volu	0
Environmental Audio Effects	(Generic)
Battle music	(No Music Track)
Daytime music	(No Music Track)
Music delay	500
Nighttime music	(No Music Track)

The next section 'Scripts' is where you can attach scripts to different events – such as when the player enters or leaves the area. Since we don't have any scripts yet, we'll keep moving.

Sound

The 'Sound' section is where we can add noises and music to the area. Try changing the daytime and nighttime ambient sound to one of the soundsets available. I've chosen Forest Day 2 and Forest Night 2:



Sound	
Ambient Sound (daytime)	Forest Day 2
Ambient Sound (daytime) volum	100
Ambient Sound (nighttime)	Forest Night 2
Ambient Sound (nighttime) volur	100
Environmental Audio Effects	Forest
Battle music	KOS Combat
Daytime music	Outdoor Swamp
Music delay	500
Nighttime music	Illefarn Ruins Theme

Unfortunately, it doesn't tell you what numbers to put in the 'volume' part, so I can't tell you what would be the best to put in here.

'Environmental Audio Effects' lets you choose the type of area you've made, which will effect how the sounds come out (e.g. adding echo in a canyon or dulling the sound if it's dusty). I've selected 'Forest'.

Also choose whatever music you like for Battle, Daytime and Nighttime. Very soon, the music track will start playing. You can alter the music delay to make it longer or shorter – it will affect the amount of time it waits before playing the track again after it finishes. I've chosen some music brand new to Neverwinter Nights 2, and I like it!

1.8 Ending the session

OK, that's enough for one session. Time to take a breather. To save your work, go to 'File' > 'Save As' and save your module. Congratulations – you've now got a basic handle on how to navigate around the toolset, place items, and play around with properties.

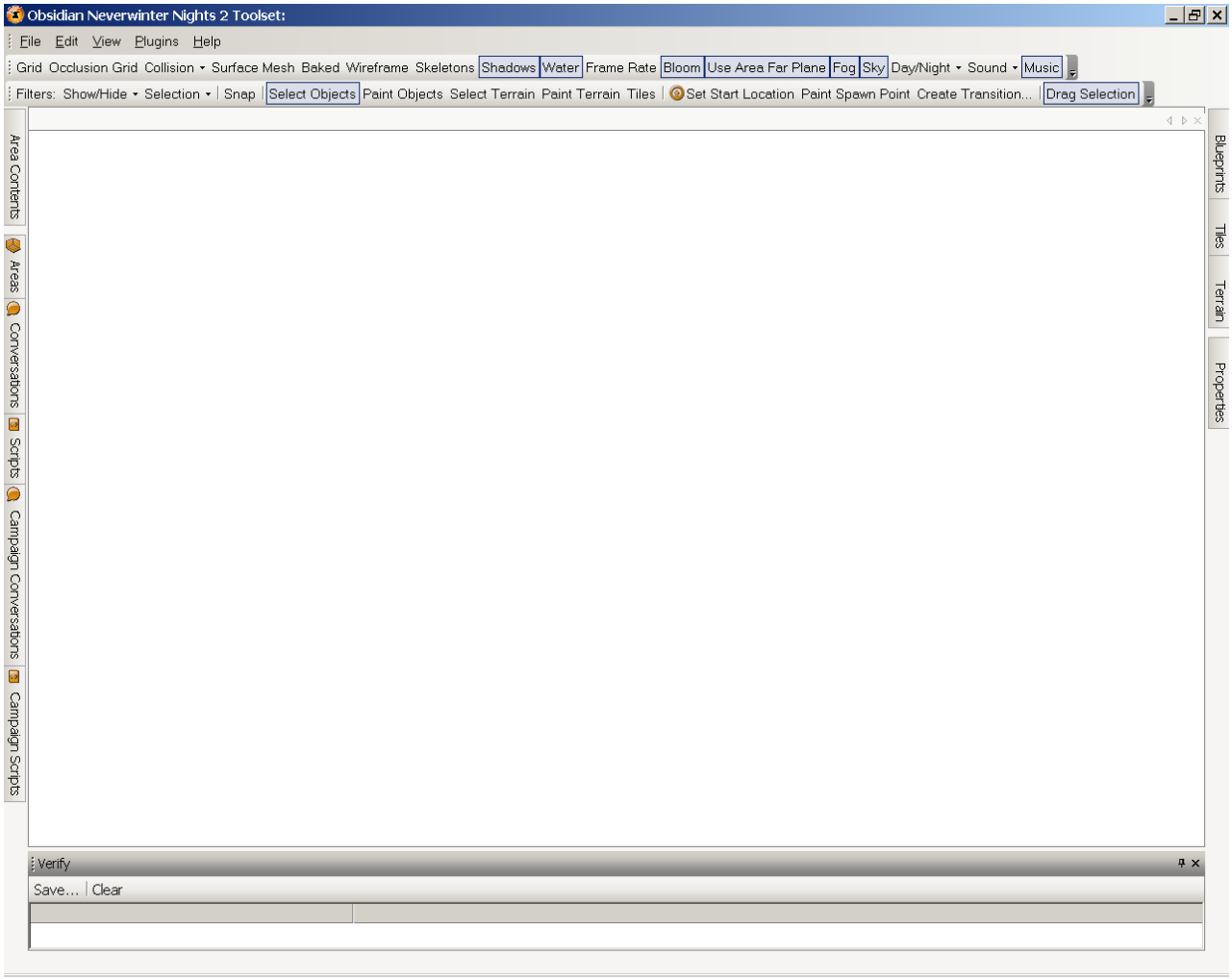
> **Note.** People have reported losing their work if they choose 'File' > 'Save' the first time they save a module. So to be safe, the first time you go to save your module, choose 'Save As' and give your module a file name.

Session 2

2.1 Loading up the last session

When you're ready for this session, open up the toolset, and go to File > Load and select the module that you saved in the last session. Since the toolset always opens up with a blank module, it will ask you if you want to save this blank module before continuing. Just click 'No'.

Before going any further, I wanted to show you what my interface looks like now I've customised it a little:

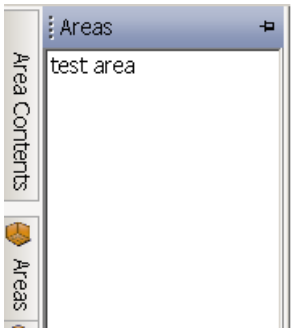

Obsidian Neverwinter Nights 2 Toolset:
File Edit View Plugins Help
Grid Occlusion Grid Collision Surface Mesh Baked Wireframe Skeletons Shadows Water Frame Rate Bloom Use Area Far Plane Fog Sky Day/Night Sound Music
Filters: Show/Hide Selection Snap Select Objects Paint Objects Select Terrain Paint Terrain Tiles Set Start Location Paint Spawn Point Create Transition... Drag Selection
Area Contents
Areas
Conversations
Scripts
Campaign Conversations
Campaign Scripts
Blueprints
Tiles
Terrain
Properties
Verify
Save... Clear

As you can see, I've converted all the windows that were taking up space to tabs on the side docks, using the pin icon in each window:

I've also reduced the size of the 'Verify' console down the bottom. This gives me a big space to work in.

This is a personal choice – it is just a suggestion.

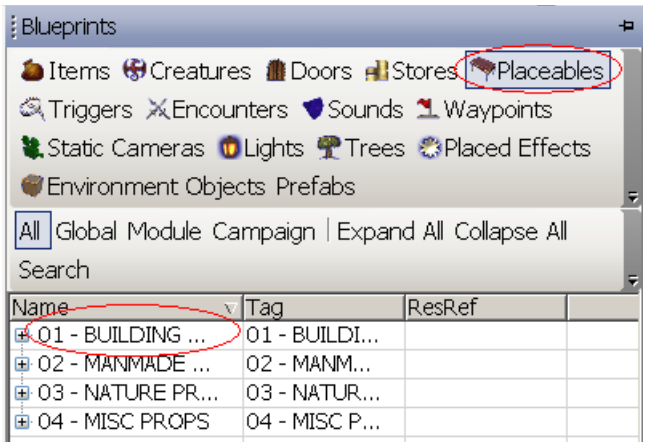
Let's open up the test area we created in the last session. Click on the 'Areas' tab on the left, and click on 'Test Area' (or whatever you called it):



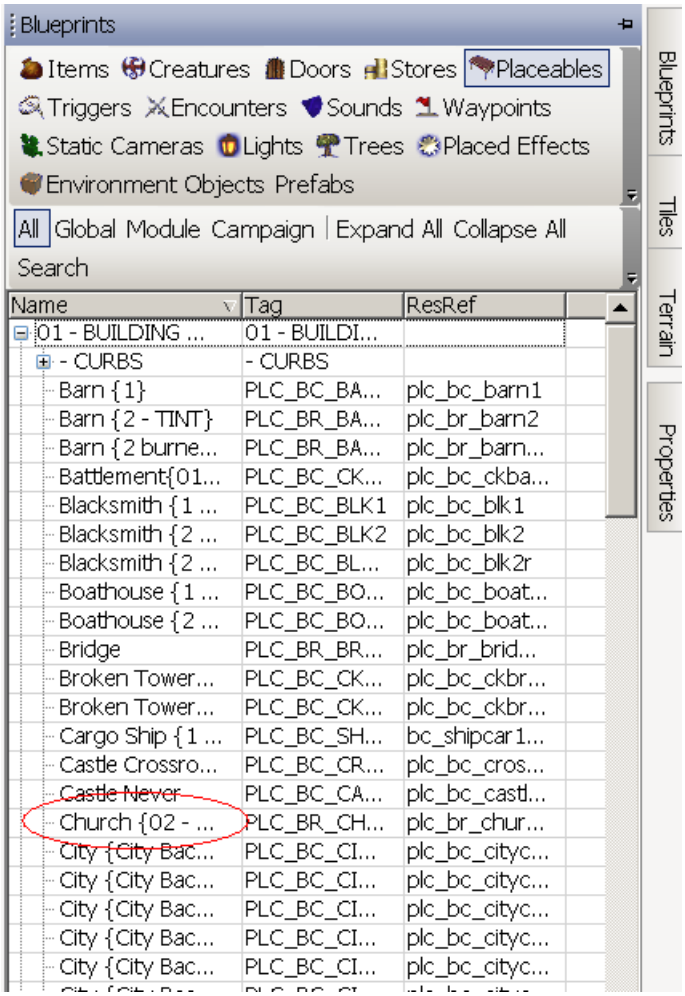
Your calming oak tree should appear back on your screen.

2.2 Placing more stuff in your area

OK, time to flesh out the area a bit more. To add more stuff, click on the 'Blueprints' tab on the right. The blueprints window will come up. Select the 'Placeables' button and a list of categories will come up:



Click on the '+' sign by the first category – buildings. A list of the different buildings you can place will appear. I'd like you to select 'Church' from this list:



When you select 'Church', you can then left click anywhere in the area to place down the church.

> *Do not cover up the red arrow in a circle!* This little symbol indicates the start point for your adventure. It is where the player will first appear when they start your module. Later, you can move it to where you want the adventure to start.

You should end up with a lovely church like this:

Remember, click on 'Select Objects' once you've placed it to get it off your cursor (or press the 'Esc' key on your keyboard):

2.3 Rotating objects

If you don't like the way the church is facing, you can rotate it. Select the church and a green box should appear around it like so:

Notice there is now a toolbar with rotate options just above the window. You can click on these buttons to rotate the church through 45 degree increments.

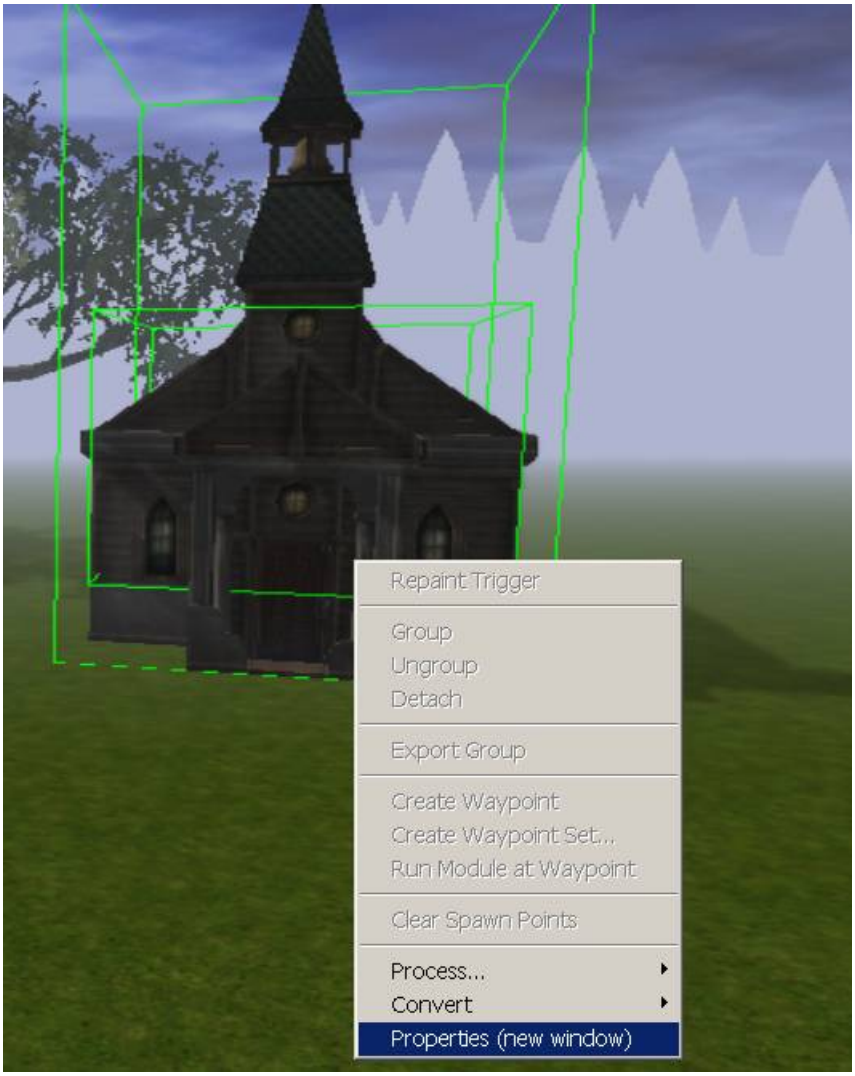
> **Note:** To be more precise than this, you can hold down CTRL and use the left and right arrow keys to rotate a placeable.

To move the church north, west, east or south, just left click the church when it is selected and drag it to where you would like the church to be.

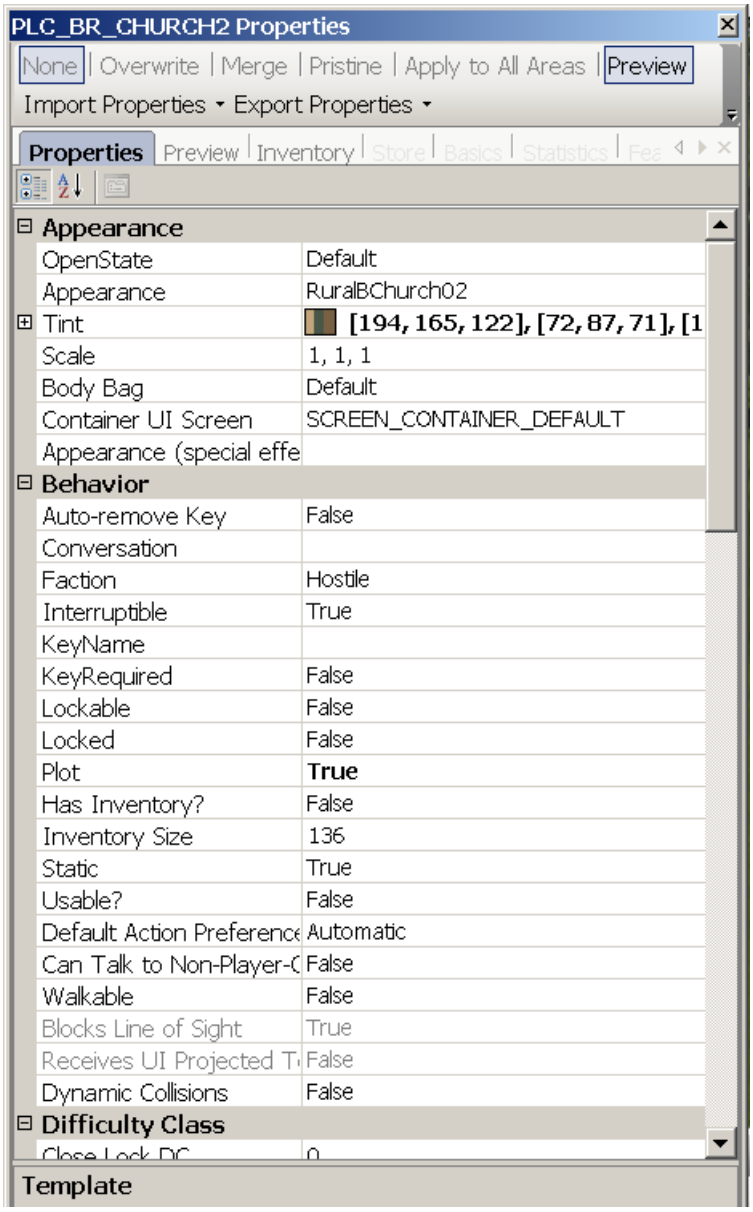
To move an object up or down (i.e., make it higher or lower), hold down ALT on your keyboard and right click and drag the object up or down.

2.4 Object properties

While we've got the church selected, let's right-click it and look at its properties:



You'll get a properties window that looks like this:

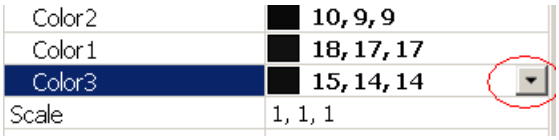


Appearance

For now, only the first category, 'Appearance' is of most interest to us. Most of the rest of the options are for objects that we want the player to interact with. (Yes, we want players to go inside the church, but they are actually interacting with the **door** object, not the church object – more on this later).

One of the exciting things about the Neverwinter Nights 2 Toolset is our ability to paint objects with different colours (called 'Tinting'). Click on the '+' next to Tint and you'll see there are three colours you can customise.

To change a colour, select it and click the drop down arrow that appears:



A window will appear letting you choose whatever colour you like. Have a play around and then look at how your church looks.

You can also change the size of the church under 'Scale', as described in Session 1 with the oak tree. Ignore the 'Body Bag' and other options for now, they're not applicable.

Behaviour

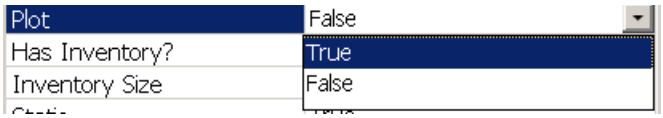
Three True/False options under the 'Behavior' tab are important to get to grips with, though. These are 'Static', 'Usable' and 'Plot':

Behavior	
Auto-remove Key	False
Conversation	
Faction	Hostile
Interruptible	True
KeyName	
KeyRequired	False
Lockable	False
Locked	False
Plot	**True**
Has Inventory?	False
Inventory Size	136
Static	True
Usable?	False
Default Action Preference	Automatic
Can Talk to Non-Player-C	False
Walkable	False
Blocks Line of Sight	True
Receives UI Projected T	False
Dynamic Collisions	False

'Static' means the object won't do anything whatsoever – it's just decoration. Our church is static, so this is set to 'True'

'Usable' means that the player can interact with it some way – like have a conversation, bash it or open it. This is set to 'False' for the church (as I mentioned before, the door to the church is usable, and we'll cover that in a moment).

'Plot' guarantees that the object will never be destroyed – I've set this to true, just to be 100% sure that the building won't accidentally be destroyed:



This probably isn't necessary though, given it is a static object anyway. But I'm paranoid.

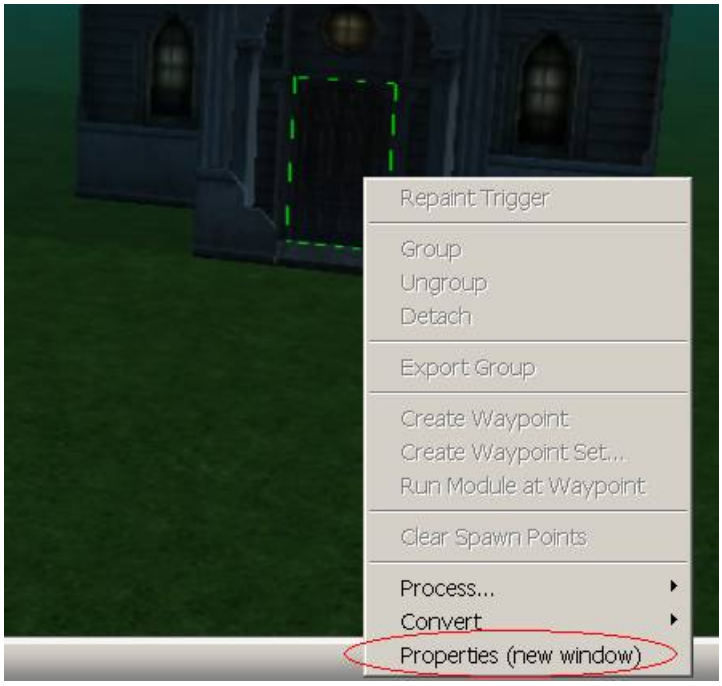
It's good to set really important objects in your module to 'Plot' to make sure the player can't accidentally destroy it and ruin the rest of the game.

The rest of the options don't apply to static objects like our church. I'll get into these in more detail in the next setting when we place a chest.

2.5 Doors

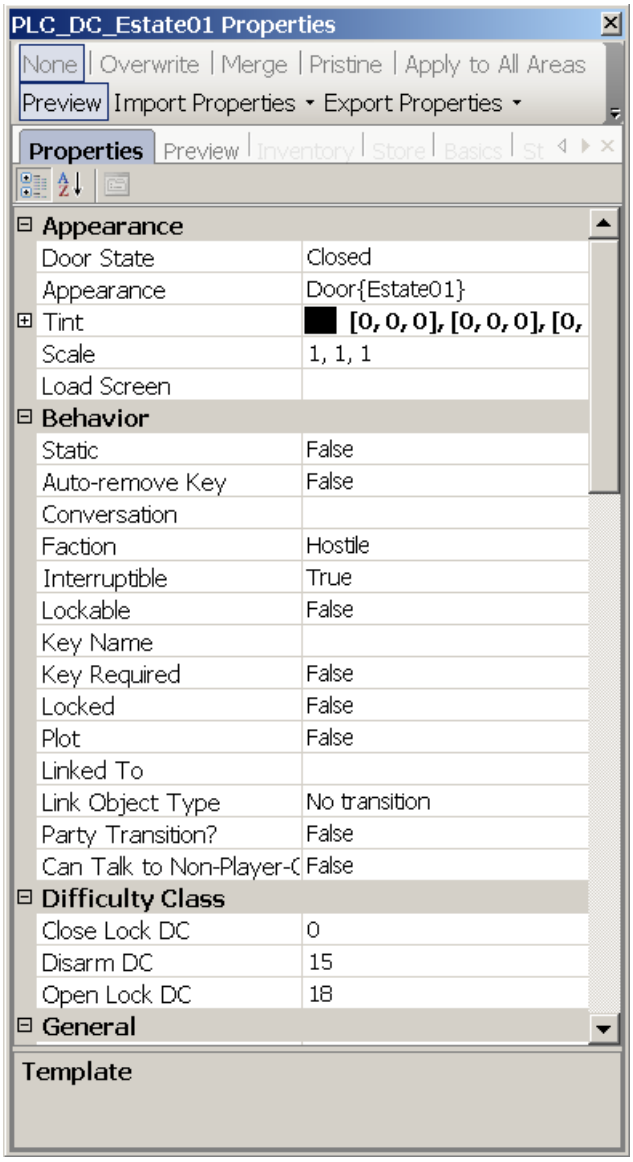
Doors are excellent ways for players to move between different areas of your module. Moving from one area to another is called a 'Transition', so you need to set up transitions between areas in your module. We're going to take the first step towards this now by looking at the door to the church.

Left-click on the door so the green wire box comes up around it, and then right click it and select 'Properties (new window)' from the menu:



Note. If you select an object, it's properties automatically appear in the 'Properties' tab/box. So you can edit properties that way if you'd prefer. I'm only in the habit of using the 'Properties (New Window)' option because that is most similar to the original toolset.

This will bring up the properties window for the door, which looks like this:



Appearance

We'll start with the 'Appearance' category. The 'Door State' lets you specify if you want the door to start opened or closed. Closed is fine.

'Appearance' lets you choose a different looking door. At the moment, though, this only brings up errors, so we're stuck with 'Estate01' on the Church.

'Tint' again lets you change the colours of the door if you want to.

'Scale' should probably not be used for doors – they've got to fit in the doorframe!

'Load Screen' lets you choose a load screen to come up when the player uses the door to go to another area. This is not necessary, because you select load screens for each area anyway. It is just if you want to override the load screen that would normally appear for that area.

Behaviour

Under 'Behaviour' are some important options. Note this time 'Static' is false, because we want players to be able to interact with it. It's got options to lock the door and specify a key that opens it, but for now we want the door to be unlocked. I'll cover locking objects in a later session.

'Faction' is set to hostile by default – which just means players can bash down the door with no faction problems occurring. This should be left as is, unless you're controlling factions in a very advanced way.

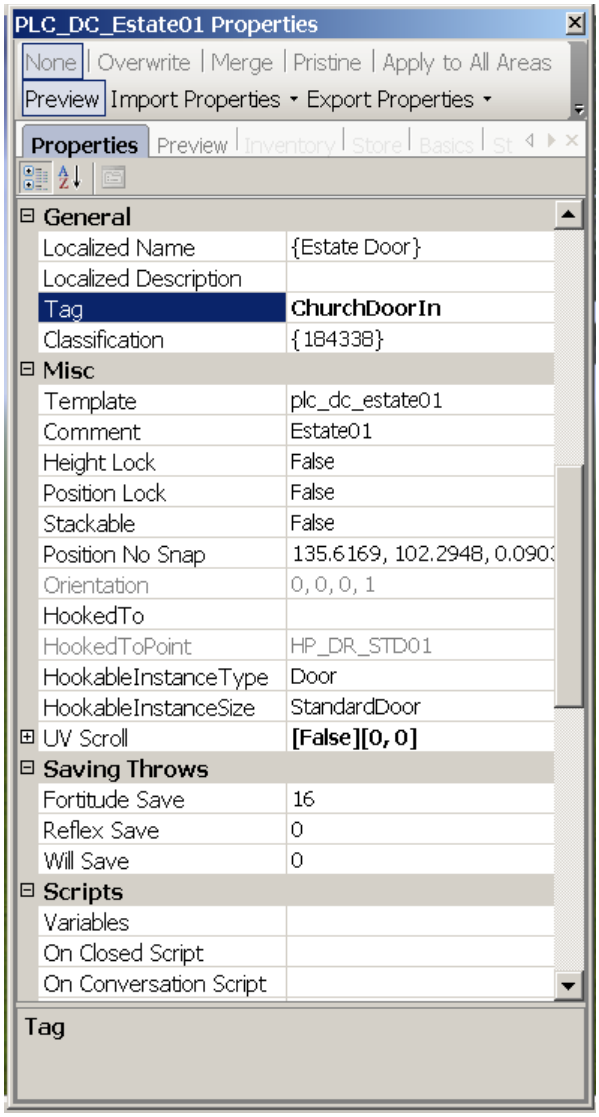
Again 'Plot' stops players from being able to damage the door. Let's leave this as 'False', so players can bash their way into the church if they really want to.

The next part 'Difficulty Class' sets how difficult it would be to close the lock on the door (if there is one), disarm the trap on the door (if there is one), or open the lock on the door (if there is one). The higher the number, the harder it will be for the player to do that action. Since we don't want to lock or place a trap on the door, it doesn't matter what these numbers are.

General

Now, I'm going to scroll down a bit to look at 'General'. ***The 'Tag' property here is vital to creating the transition.***

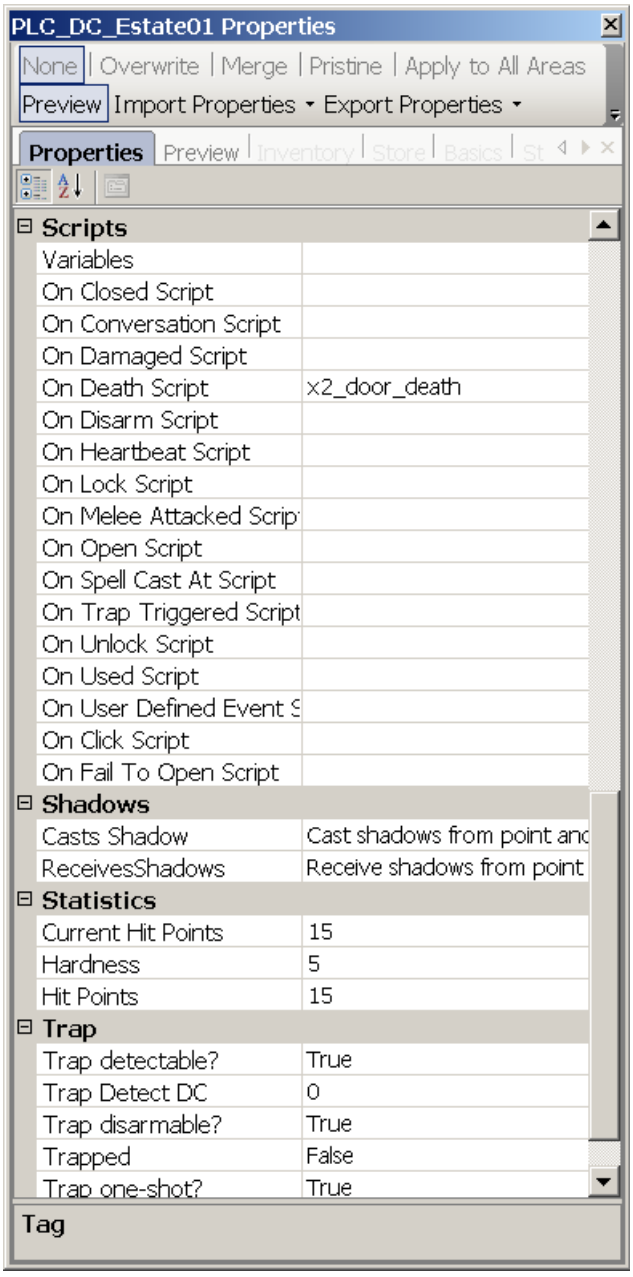
You can set the tag to whatever you want, as long as it is UNIQUE. It's a good idea to have a naming convention when writing tags. Here, I've written 'ChurchDoorIn':



This area is now ready to be transitioned to.

Other Sections

Scrolling down the properties box, even further, we see there's a section, 'Scripts', where we can attach more scripts to, a 'Shadows' category if we need to fine tune how shadows work, 'Statistics' (which will affect how hard the door is to bash down: the higher any of the numbers, the harder it will be to bash down), and 'Trap' where you can place a trap on a door and select its properties. But traps will have to be for a later tutorial.



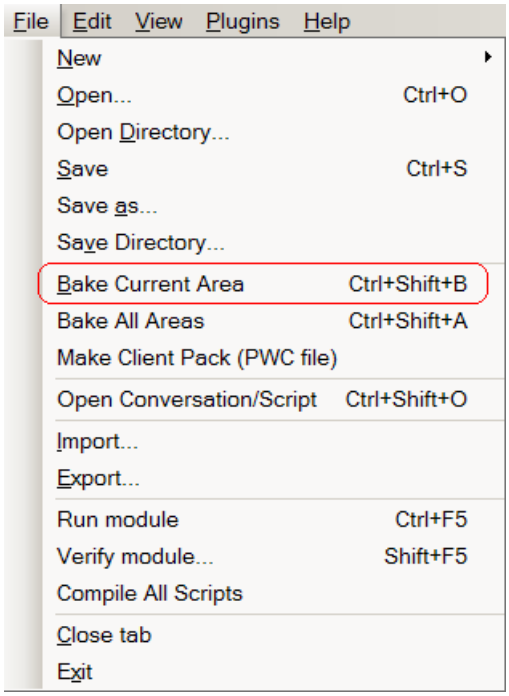
But for now, we are almost done with this area ... except for one last thing: baking.

2.6 Baking

Whenever you finish working on an area, you will need to 'bake' it before you can test it, or allow players into the area. Any time you make changes to an area, you will have to bake it again before you can test it again.

> ***If you don't bake an area, a player will be stuck, and not able to walk around the area! This would not be fun, especially half way through an exciting adventure...***

To bake an area, go to 'File', and then 'Bake Current Area':



Your area is baked and ready to go! (Kind of makes you feel you're working with Fimo, doesn't it?)

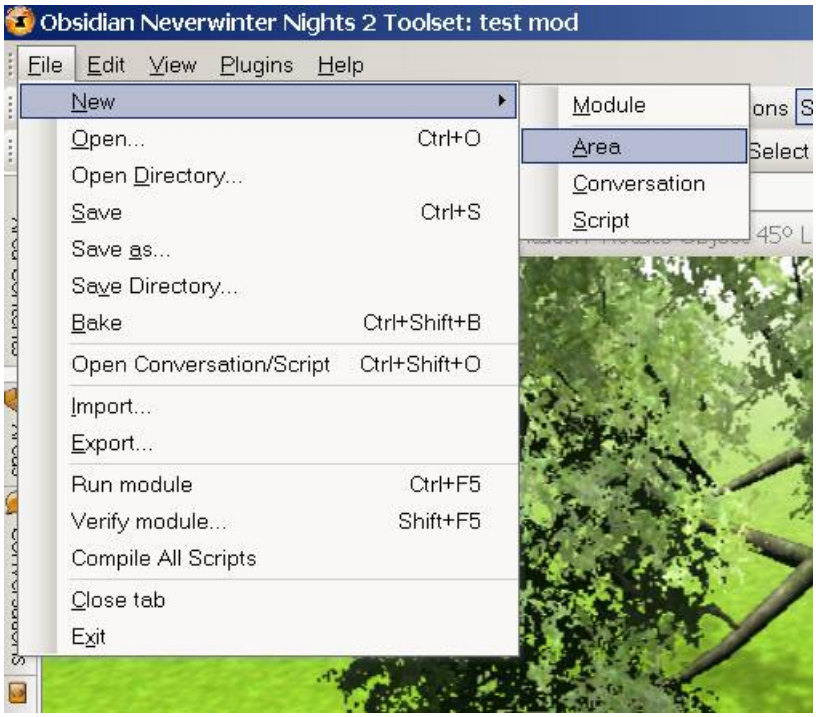
> **Walkmeshes.** Walkmeshes are lines on the map that control where players can walk in the area, and where they can't walk. For such simple, flat external areas, we shouldn't have to play around with walkmeshes before we bake.
>
> In the next tutorial, we will make the area more complex, and edit its walkmesh.

Congratulations on finishing your first area, even if it is basic. In a later tutorial we'll be able to come back and play around with the really powerful terrain tools that the toolset has.

2.7 Interior areas

We want to give this church an interior, so players can go inside the church. The interior will be a whole new, different area to the outside area we just made.

To start creating this interior area, click on File > New > Area:



This time, instead of leaving it on 'Exterior', we want to choose 'Interior (tiles)'. In 'Area Tag', call it something like 'Church':

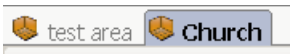
New Area Wizard - Area Settings
Welcome to the New Area Wizard
Please enter the tag and type of the new area.
Area Tag: Church
Area Type: Interior (tiles)
Cancel
< Back
Next >

Click 'Next' to get to the 'Area Size' screen. For this area, I'd like you to make a 5 x 5 area.

To do this, select 'Tiny' from the list and then use the scroll bars to change the numbers to '5':

> **Why 5x5?** These numbers are the number of tiles in the area – so this area will be five tiles long and five tiles wide. *However*, Obsidian has recommended leaving a square of black tiles around the edge of the area. Otherwise walls will be against the edge of the area and you will be able to see the back of the wall, which isn't pretty. (If this doesn't make sense, hopefully it will when we start building the area). So for this reason, you need to make the area 2 tiles longer and 2 tiles wider than you actually want it. We want a 3x3 area, so we're actually going to make the area 5x5.

OK, click Finish and we're almost ready to start building the interior area. First, though, notice how there are two tabs now: one for the old area ('test area') and one for the new area ('Church'):



To the right of these tabs, you can see the tab controls:

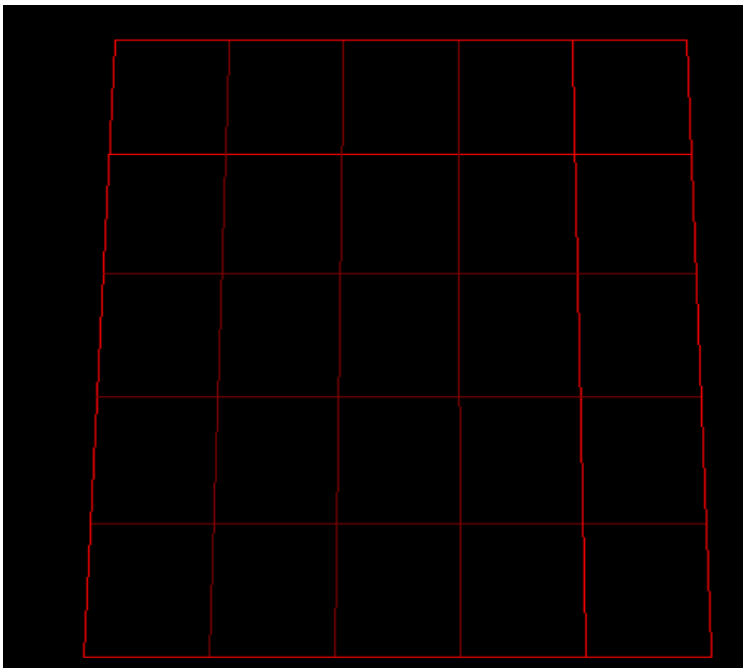
(Previous tab, next tab, close tab)

This means you can have more than one area open at a time, and switch between areas. Very handy! (Though it may slow down your system if you have too many areas open at once).

2.8 Laying down tiles

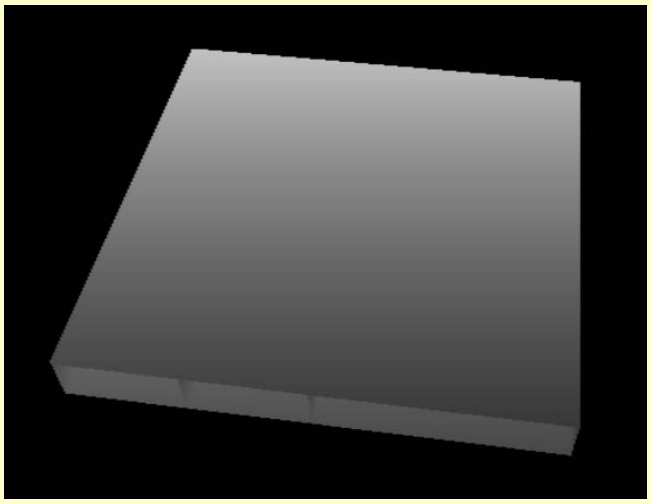
OK, you've probably just got a black area in your window now. So the first thing you need to do is select 'Occlusion grid' from the menu:

This will make a red grid show up in your window showing you where to place tiles:

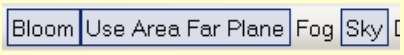


If your screen is just black, check that 'Occlusion Grid' is highlighted in blue, and play around with your camera controls until you can see the grid properly.

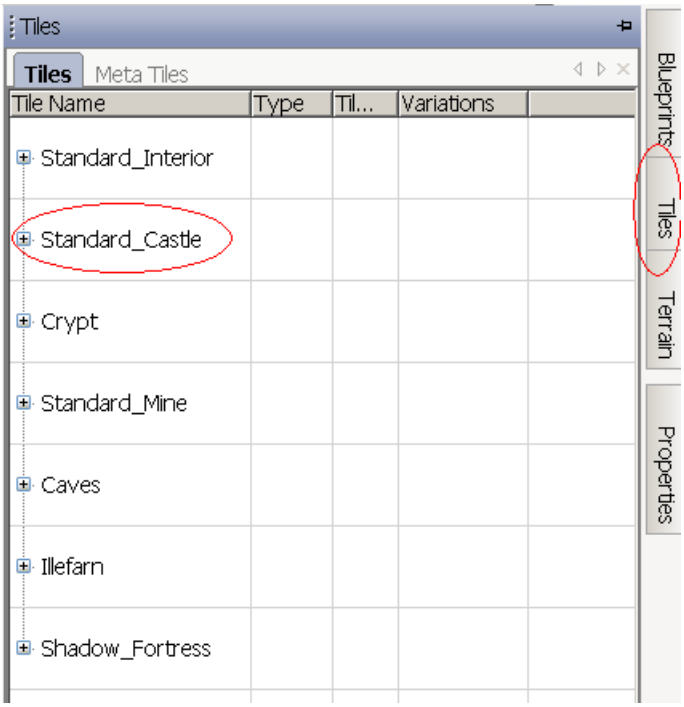
Fog: If you have 'Fog' selected in the menu, you will see a thick grey rectangle of fog in your screen, like this:



This is going to make creating the area very difficult! So make sure to deselect 'Fog' in the menu:

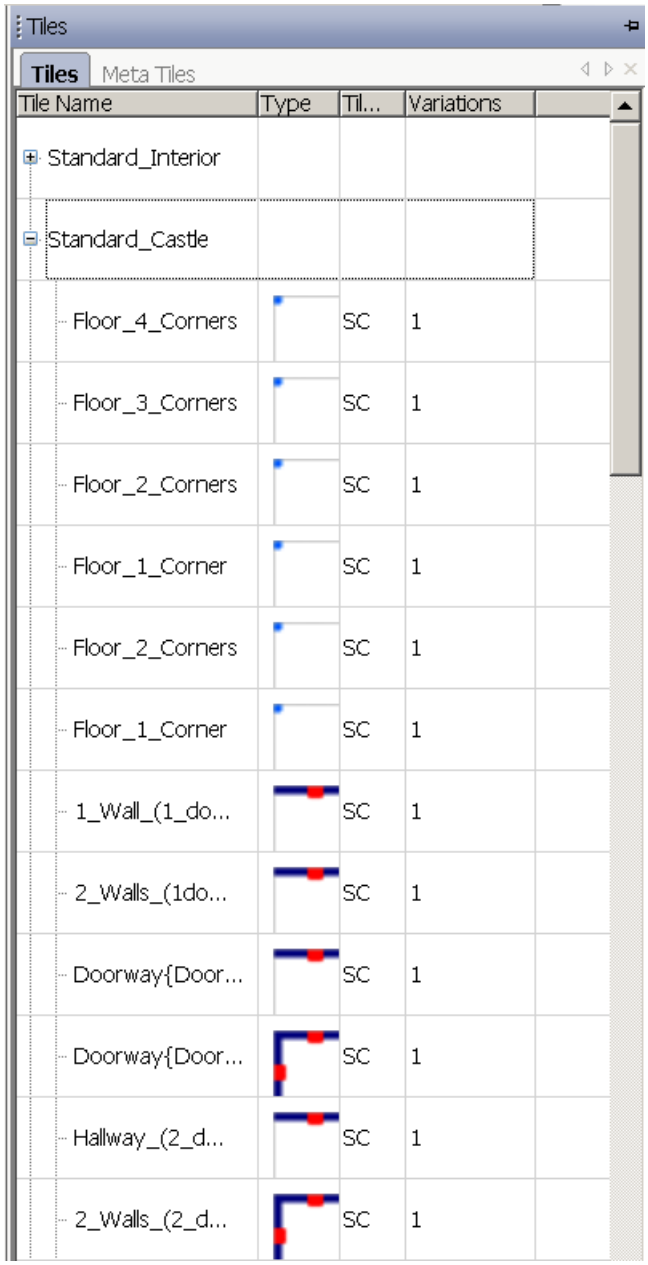


Tiles can be found in the 'Tiles' tab (surprisingly enough!) to the right of your screen:



For this church, I think Standard Castle tiles will look nice, so click on the '+' next to 'Standard_Castle'.

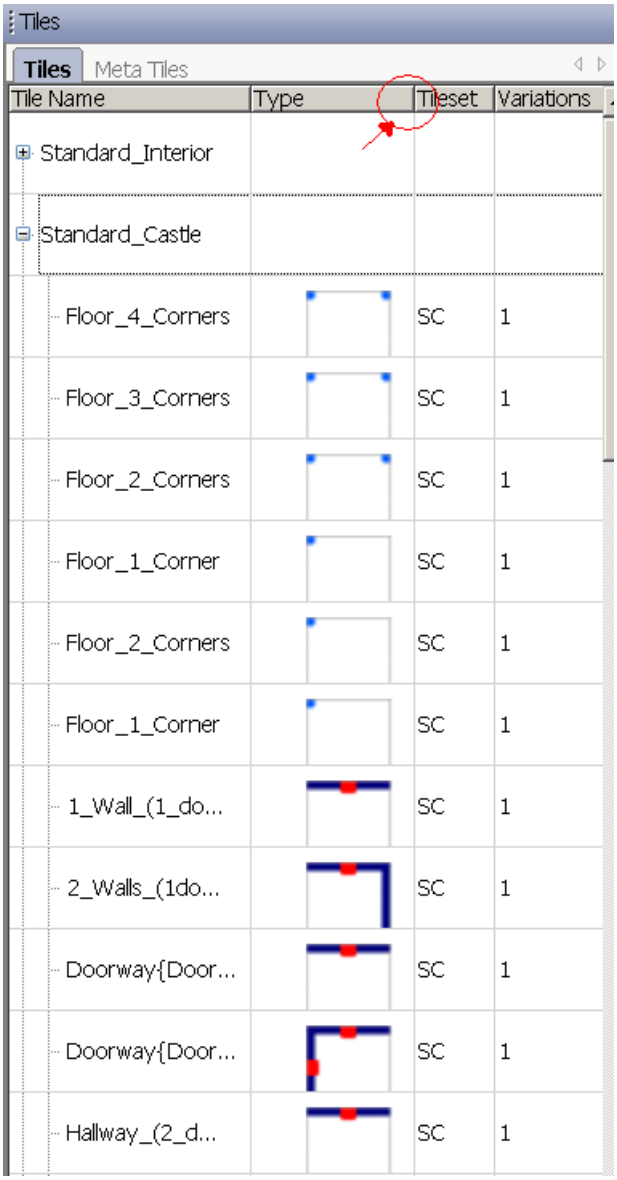
A list of tiles will appear:



The first column describes the tile.

The second column gives a rough outline of what the tile layout is, where the blue lines are walls, the red boxes are doors, and the light blue dots are corners.

However, the column starts off too small to see this picture properly, so drag out the column to make it wider:

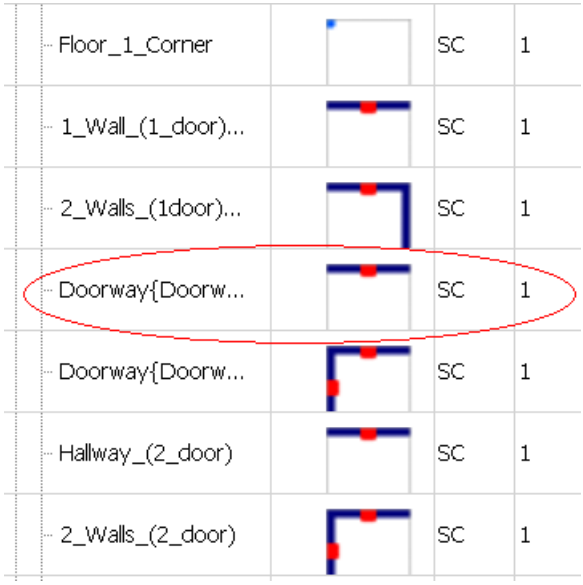


There! Now we can see the picture properly (well, the top half anyway. There doesn't seem to be anyway to resize the height of the rows, unfortunately). This perhaps may only be a problem for certain screen resolutions. My desktop is 1280 x 1024.

The third column is not very useful (it just tells us what tileset we're using: SC = Standard Castle), but the fourth column is! It tells us how many variants the tile has. If this number is greater than 1, it means there are different versions of this tile, maybe with broken pillars or such.

*** If you place a tile with more than 1 variant, use the up and down arrows to cycle through them when you are placing the tile down ***

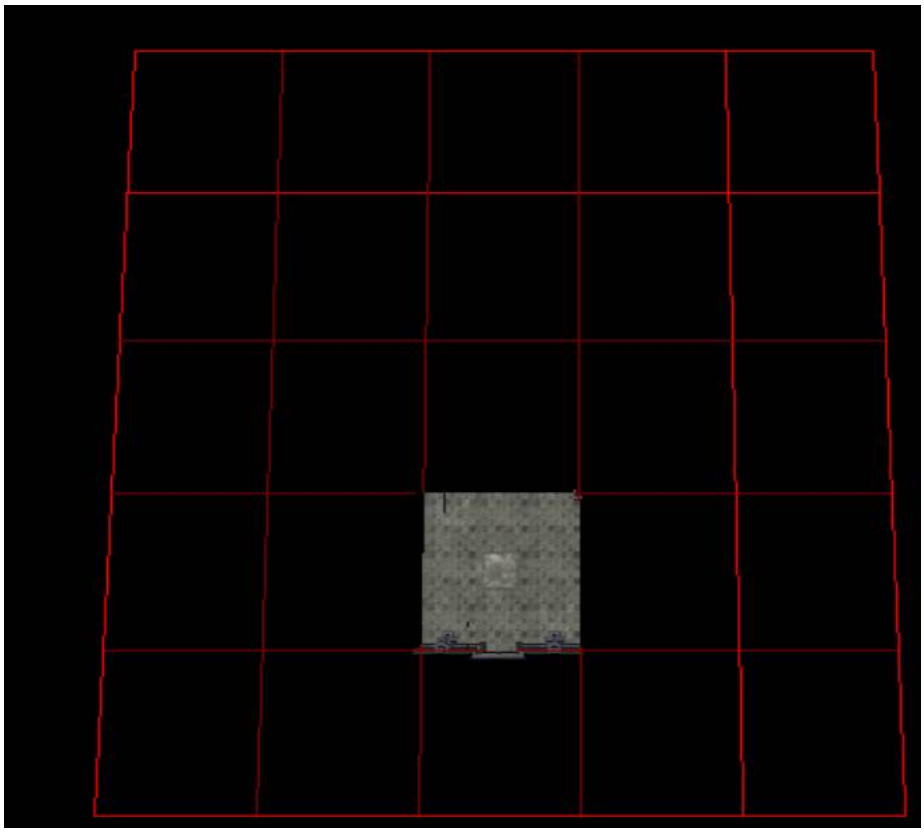
To start with, I'd like to place down the door that will lead back outside. So choose the first 'Doorway' tile:



Then it will be stuck to your cursor, just like the tree and the church.

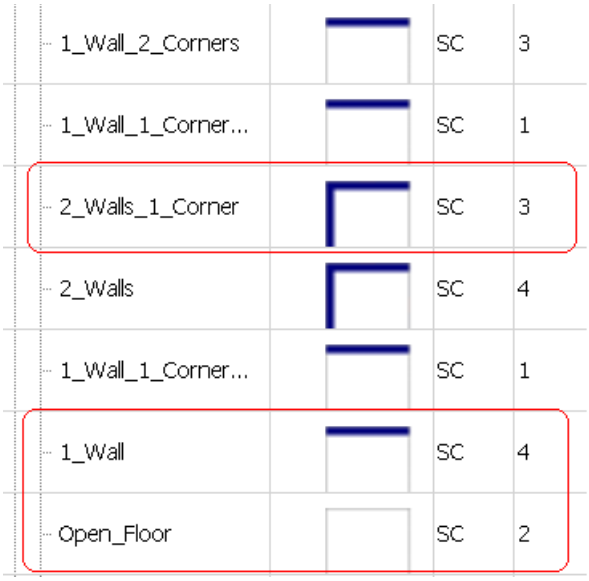
**** You need to rotate your tile <u>before</u> you place it down: use the left and right arrow keys ****

Rotate the tile so that the doorway is facing the bottom of your screen. Then place down the tile in the middle tile of the second to bottom row, like so:



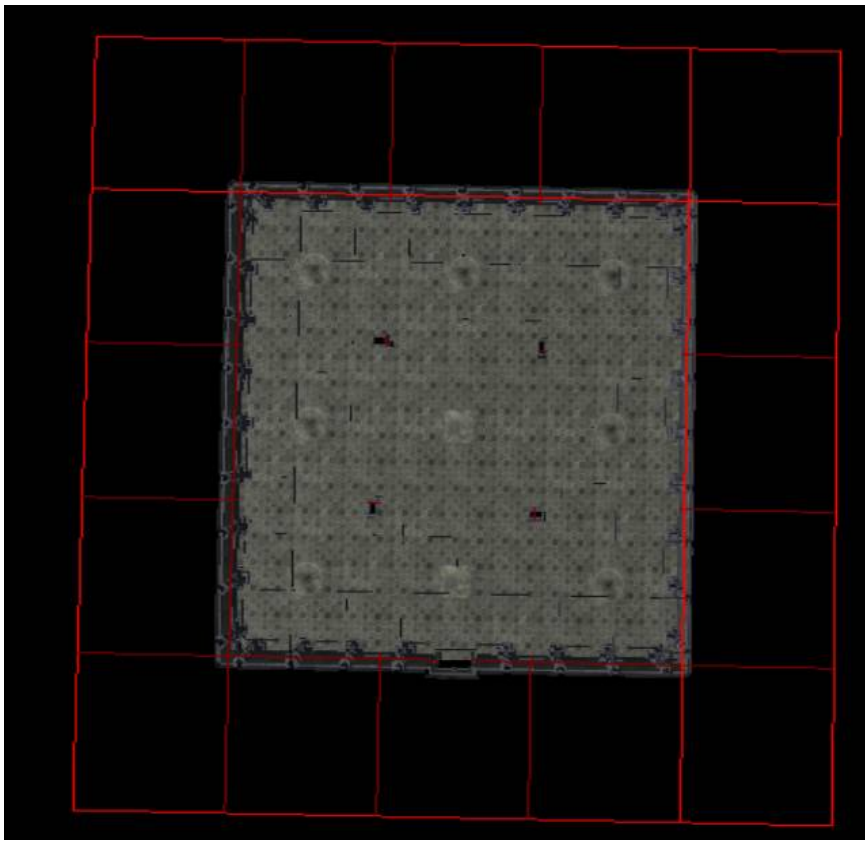
This is because, as I said earlier, we want a ring of black, unused tiles around the edge to make the area look correct.

Great! Now, use the following tiles to finish the inside of the church:



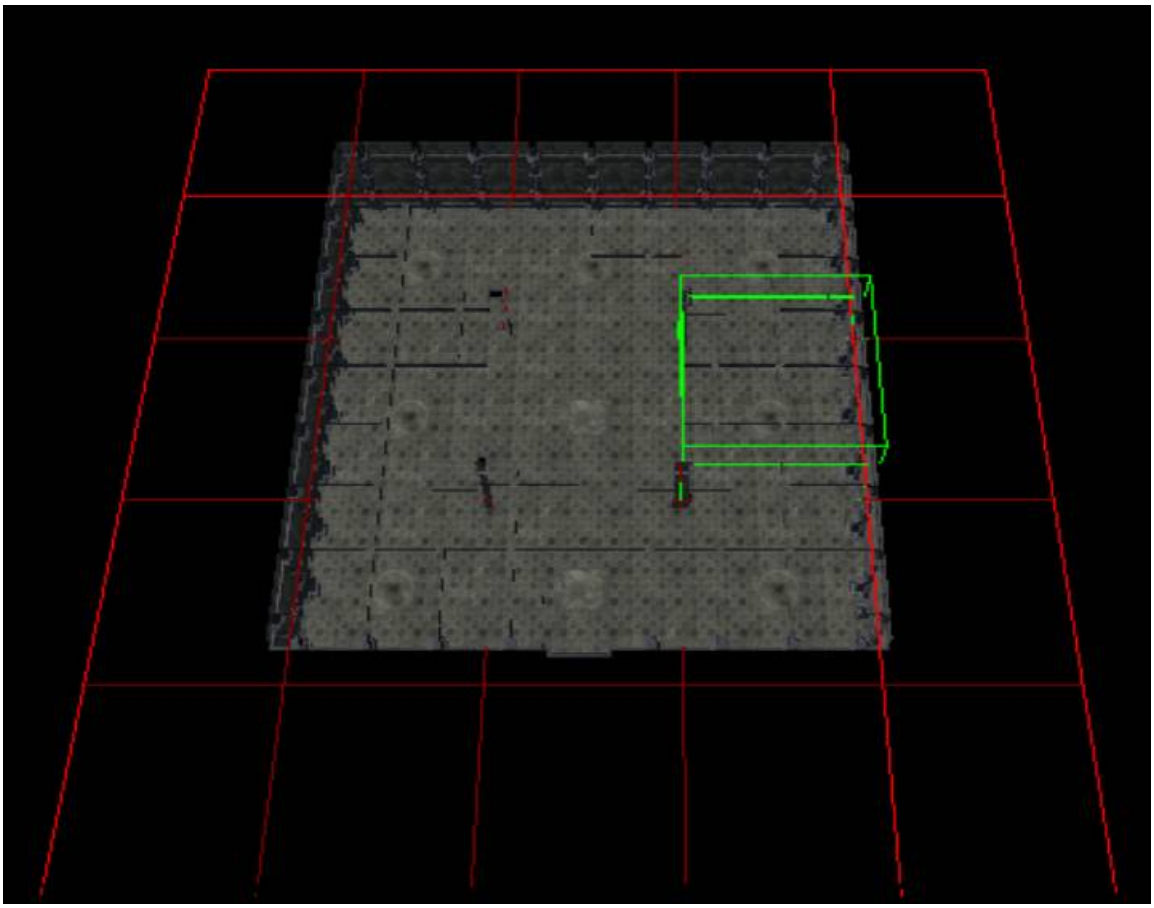
Note that both these tiles have other variants, so practise cycling through them using the up and down arrows before placing them down.

Your finished church should look like this:



If you make a mistake, you can delete the tile. First, click on 'Tiles':

This will allow you to select the tiles. Left click on the tile you want to delete so the green box comes up around it:



Then just hit 'Delete' on your keyboard.

Congratulations! You have now finished the basics of the inside of your church. Use the camera controls to move around and look at the church from different angles.

2.9 Creating a transition between doors

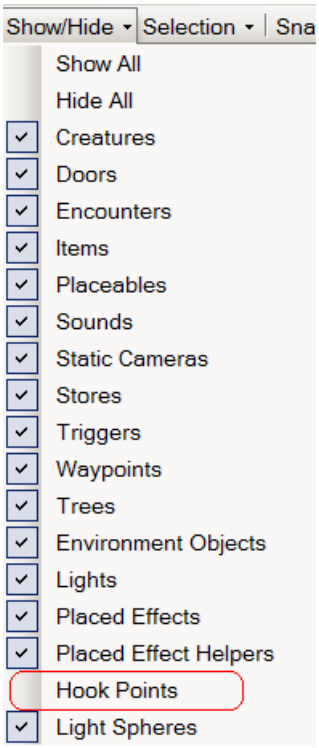
Now we're ready to join the two areas. The first step is to place a door in the doorway.

Move the camera around until you've got a good view of your doorway:

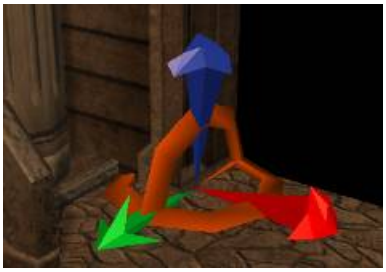
It is much easier to place doors using a combination of 'Snap' and 'Show/Hide > Show Hook Points'. (Thanks to Wudwaen for explaining this to me).

Firstly, select both the 'Snap' button on the toolbar:

And then make sure 'Hook Points' is ticked under 'Show/Hide':

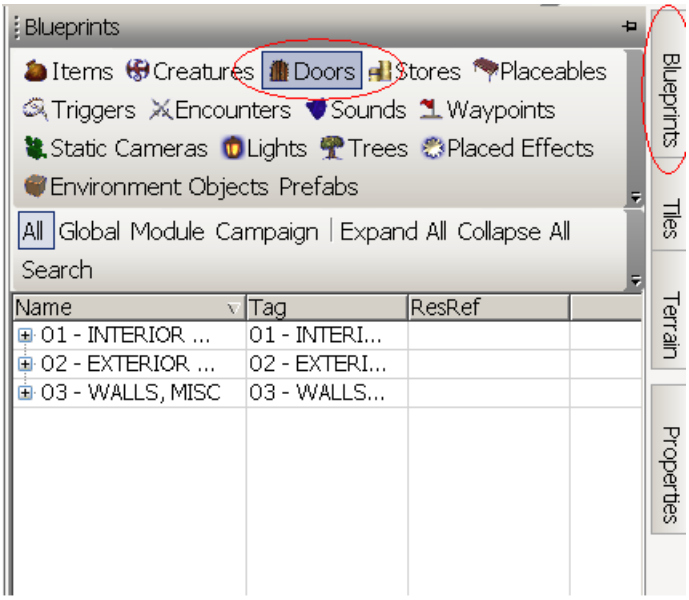


Now you should be able to see hookpoints in the door frame that look something like this:

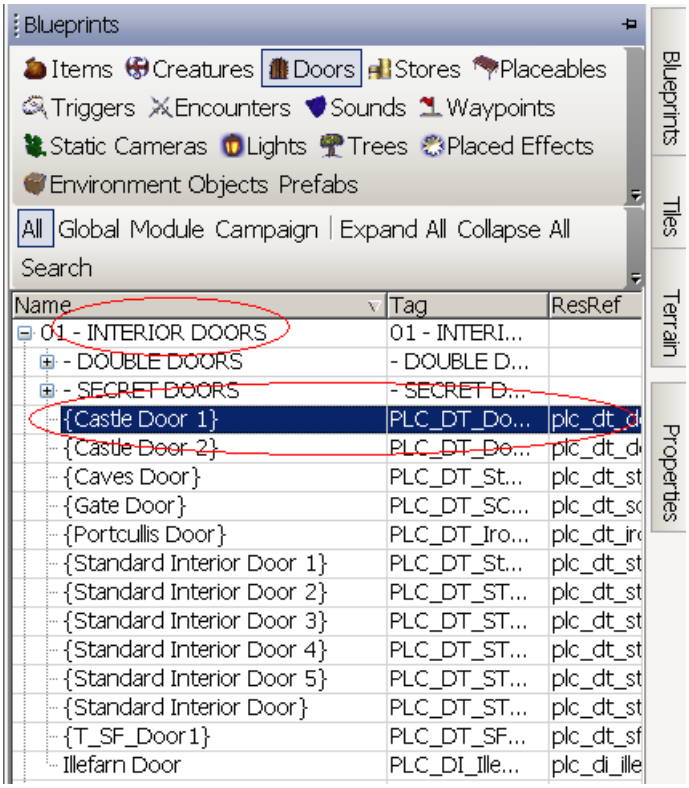


(I'm using the hookpoint from the external door because I can't seem to display hooks in my internal area for some reason that I can't fix)

Now select 'Blueprints' from the right of your screen again, and then select 'Doors':



For this door, let's select 'Interior', and then choose 'Castle Door 1' from the list:

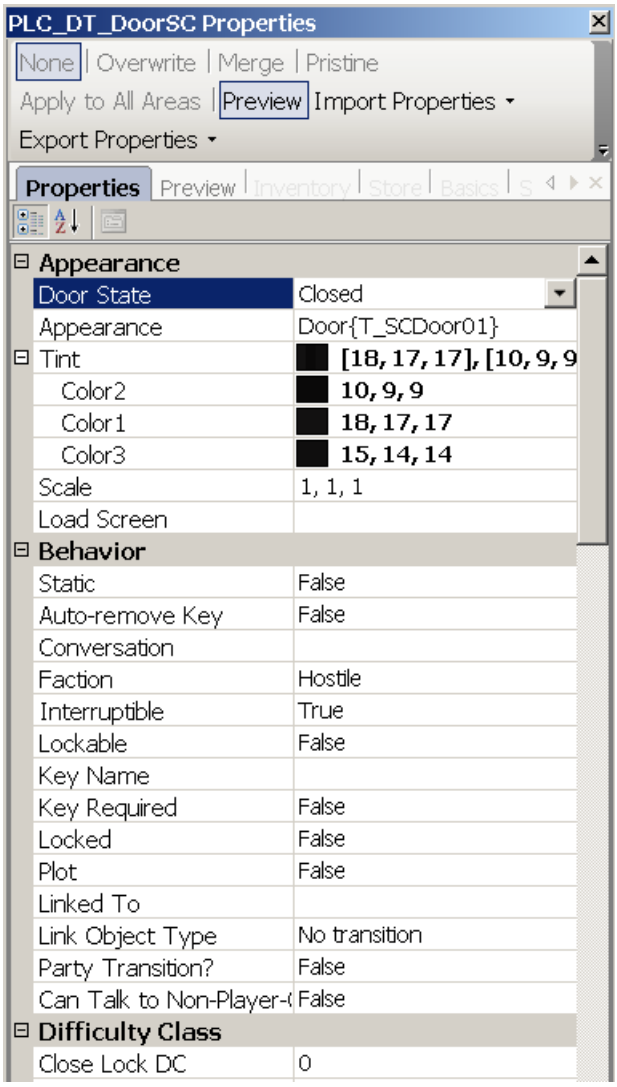

Blueprints
Items Creatures Doors Stores Placeables
Triggers Encounters Sounds Waypoints
Static Cameras Lights Trees Placed Effects
Environment Objects Prefabs
All Global Module Campaign Expand All Collapse All
Search
Name Tag ResRef
01 - INTERIOR DOORS 01 - INTERI...
- DOUBLE DOORS - DOUBLE D...
- SECRET DOORS - SECRET D...
{Castle Door 1} PLC_DT_Do... plc_dt_d
{Castle Door 2} PLC_DT_Do... plc_dt_d
{Caves Door} PLC_DT_St... plc_dt_st
{Gate Door} PLC_DT_SC... plc_dt_sc
{Portcullis Door} PLC_DT_Iro... plc_dt_ir
{Standard Interior Door 1} PLC_DT_St... plc_dt_st
{Standard Interior Door 2} PLC_DT_ST... plc_dt_st
{Standard Interior Door 3} PLC_DT_ST... plc_dt_st
{Standard Interior Door 4} PLC_DT_ST... plc_dt_st
{Standard Interior Door 5} PLC_DT_ST... plc_dt_st
{Standard Interior Door} PLC_DT_ST... plc_dt_st
{T_SF_Door1} PLC_DT_SF... plc_dt_sf
Illefarn Door PLC_DI_Ille... plc_di_ille
Blueprints
Tiles
Terrain
Properties

You can now place it down by left clicking on the hook point. It should just snap into place.

When the door is placed correctly, it should be highlighted with a green wire box:

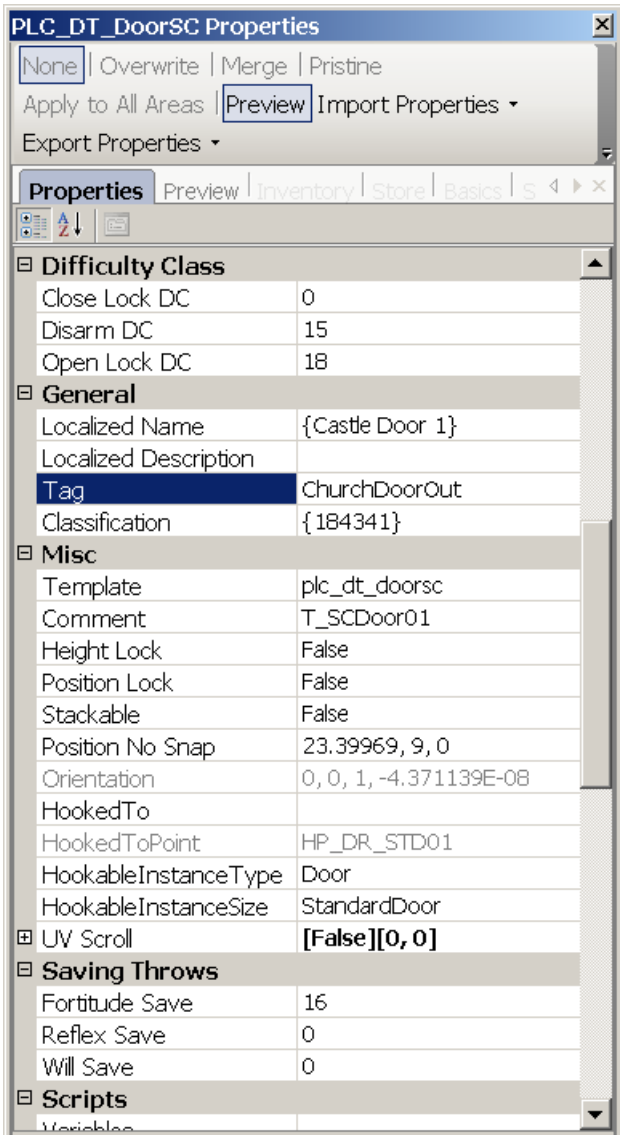
Right click on the door and select 'Properties'.

The same properties box will come up for this door as did for the church door in the outside area:



The next step is to change 'Tag', under 'General', to something UNIQUE.

I'm going to call it 'ChurchDoorOut':



Now it's time to set up the transition. Huge thanks go out to Benoist for figuring this one out!

> ***Note.*** It's important to remember not to try to set up a transition between doors until you have given both doors unique tags.

Firstly, make sure the door inside the 'Church' area is selected with a green box around it:

Secondly, click on the 'Create Transition' button:

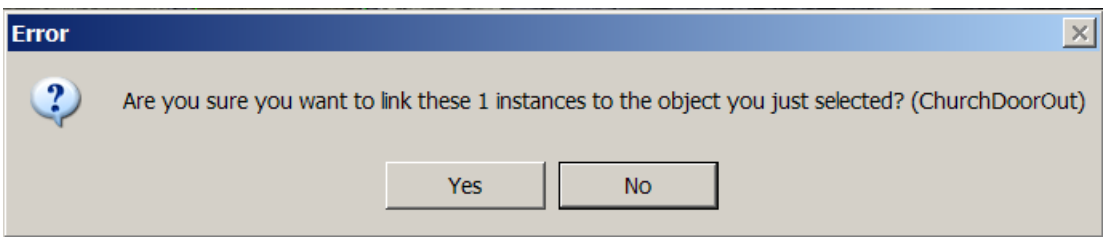
Your cursor will now have a looped arrow attached to it.

Now change your area back to 'test area' using the tabs:

And click on the door to the church.

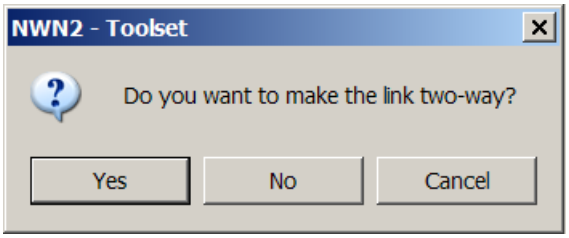
Note. If nothing happens, try doing it in the opposite order (Exterior doors can be a bit bothersome). Select the door to the church in the exterior area first, then change to the 'Church' area and select the inside door. I found this way to work very smoothly.

What should happen is that you get a question pop up like this:



Select 'Yes'.

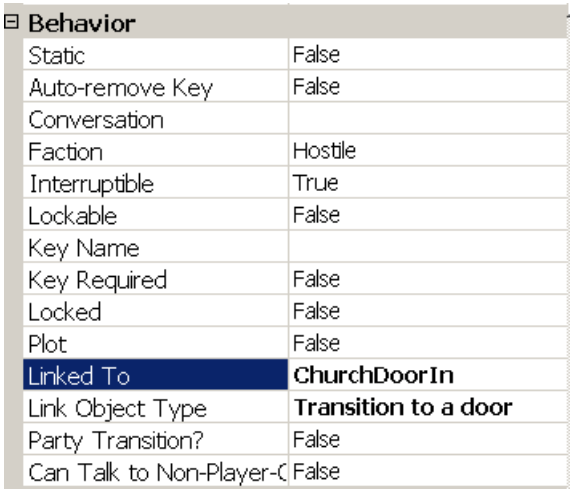
Then you'll get a second question:



Two-way means that the player can enter and exit through the doors in both directions. This is definitely what we're after. Select 'Yes'.

And that's it - the player should now be able to enter and exit the church using the doors.

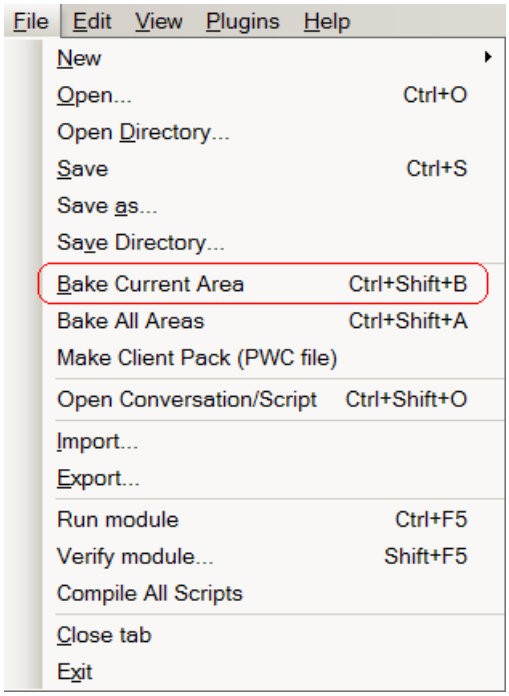
Just to let you know, the information about transitions is stored in the 'Linked To' and 'Link Object Type' fields in the doors' properties, for example:



Behavior	
Static	False
Auto-remove Key	False
Conversation	
Faction	Hostile
Interruptible	True
Lockable	False
Key Name	
Key Required	False
Locked	False
Plot	False
Linked To	**ChurchDoorIn**
Link Object Type	**Transition to a door**
Party Transition?	False
Can Talk to Non-Player-C	False

2.10 Don't forget to bake!

Even interior tilesets have to be baked before a player can enter that area, so switch back to the 'Church' area using the tabs, and select 'File > Bake Current Area':



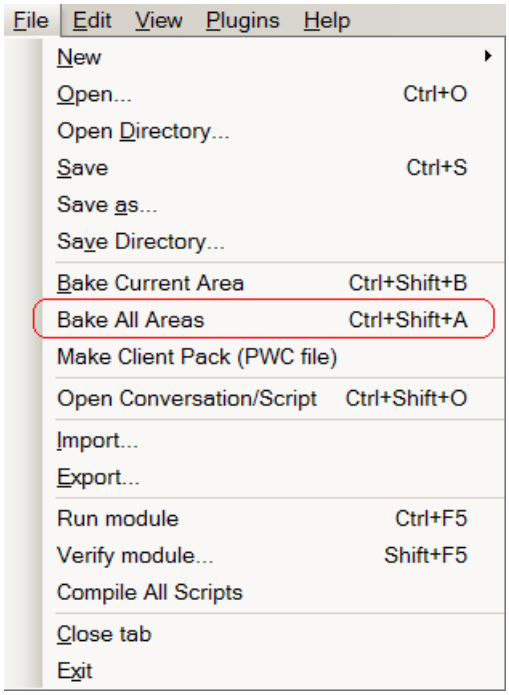
This will bake the area and it will be ready to play.

Congratulations! That's almost the end of the second session. Save your work, take a break, and be proud of the progress you've made.

2.11 Testing your work

Once you've done a substantial amount of work on your module, it's a good idea to test what you've done to see if it works. Remember though that you need to bake all areas before you can enter them as a player.

'Bake All Areas' in the file menu is perfect for this:



Choose this option with care! If you've got a novel you've always wanted to write, or a PhD thesis, now is the time. It will be baking for a very, very long period of time.

Once you're sure that at least the areas you want to test are baked, select 'Run module' from the File Menu.

A reminder will come up for you to bake all areas. Click 'OK' and the main Neverwinter Nights 2 menu will load up.

From here, select 'New Game' -> 'New Module' and select your module from the list. Then choose a character and your module will load up. Time to test out the new things you've done!

Session 3

This session, we're going to cover the exterior terrain shaping tools – one of the most exciting aspects of the new toolset. Before we begin, however, I'd like to cover plugins, for a very good reason.

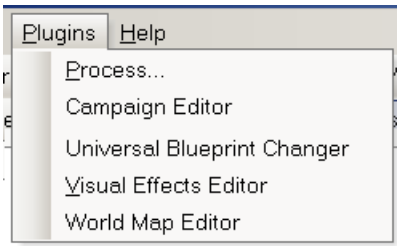
> 3.1: Installing plugins is an optional section. If you are not comfortable playing around with file names or installing plugins written by community members, that's fine – just skip to 3.2.

3.1 Installing plugins

> **Credit where credit's due:** I learned how to install plugins from mcmillanjj's excellent 'How to' available on NWNMaster's site here: http://www.nwn2.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/ToolsetTuts/plugins/installplugins.html

'Plugins' are little enhancements of the toolset, written by either Obsidian or members of the community.

Open up the toolset, and look at the Plugins menu:



You'll see the toolset currently comes with 5 plugins. But these are for advanced functions, so I'm not going to cover these.

What is more exciting is plugins written by the community. You can have a look at these at NWVault: http://nwvault.ign.com/View.php?view=NWN2PlugIns.List

> **Warning. P**lugins have the potential to wreak havoc on your toolset. Install them *one at a time* and monitor the toolset for any ill effects. If they have unwanted side effects, you can uninstall them by closing down the toolset, finding the 'Plugins' folder (see below), and deleting its .dll file. Check the comments to see if other users have had trouble with the plugin.

The one I'd like to introduce you to today for our terrain building is the 'Sinplugin' written by the

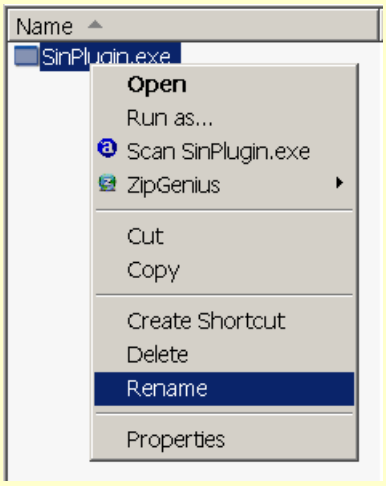
very talented DigitalSin (also known as WizShade on the NWN2 forums)

To get the plugin, click on 'Sinplugin' from the list on NWVault (see the link above):

The next page will give you information about the plugin, and a link to download it:

Click on this file name and save the file to your downloads folder.

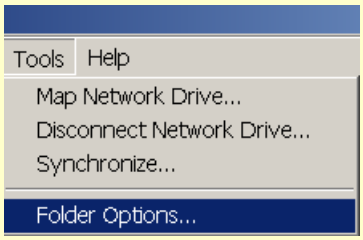
If you end up with SinPlugin.exe instead of SinPlugin.dll, after you download it, right click on the file, select 'Rename':



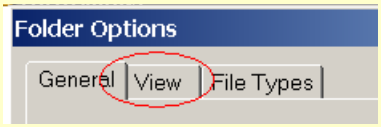
Rename it as 'SinPlugin.dll':

Windows might warn you that this may make the file unusable. We know it won't: just click 'Yes'.

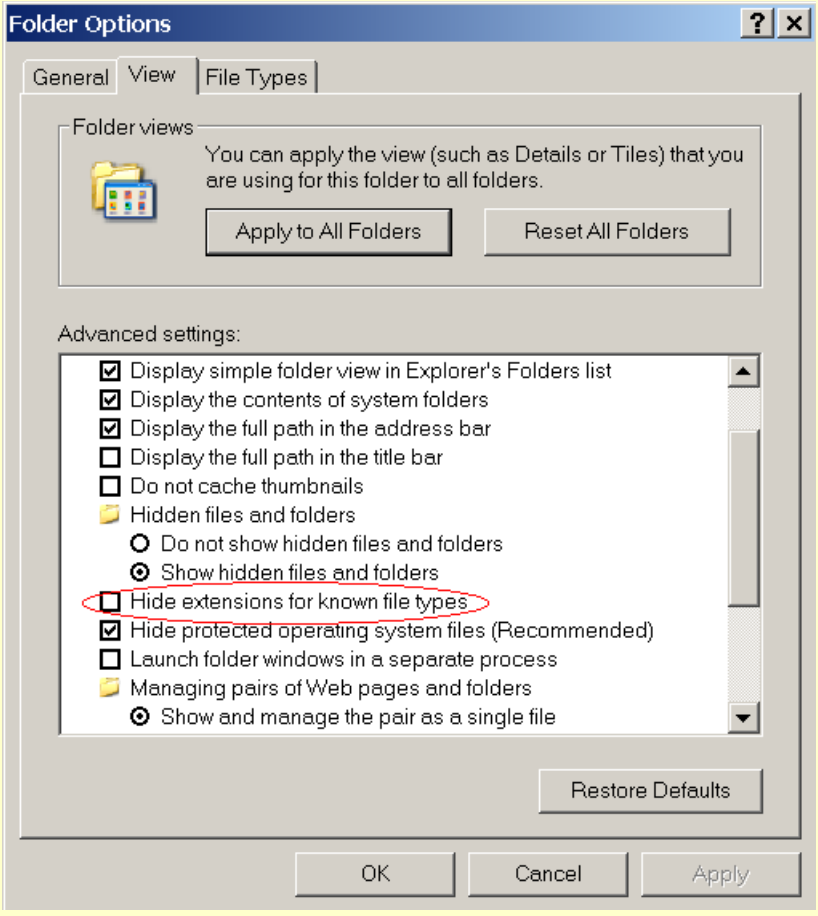
If you can't see whether it is .exe or .dll, it means you are hiding your extensions. In WindowsXP, in the folder you're in, go to Tools > Folder Options:



Then click on the 'View' tab:



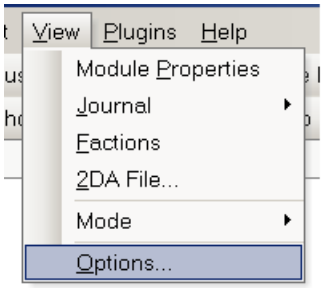
You will be given a list of view options. Scroll down until you find 'Hide extensions of known file types':


Folder Options
General
View
File Types
Folder views
You can apply the view (such as Details or Tiles) that you are using for this folder to all folders.
Apply to All Folders
Reset All Folders
Advanced settings:
Display simple folder view in Explorer's Folders list
Display the contents of system folders
Display the full path in the address bar
Display the full path in the title bar
Do not cache thumbnails
Hidden files and folders
Do not show hidden files and folders
Show hidden files and folders
Hide extensions for known file types
Hide protected operating system files (Recommended)
Launch folder windows in a separate process
Managing pairs of Web pages and folders
Show and manage the pair as a single file
Restore Defaults
OK
Cancel
Apply

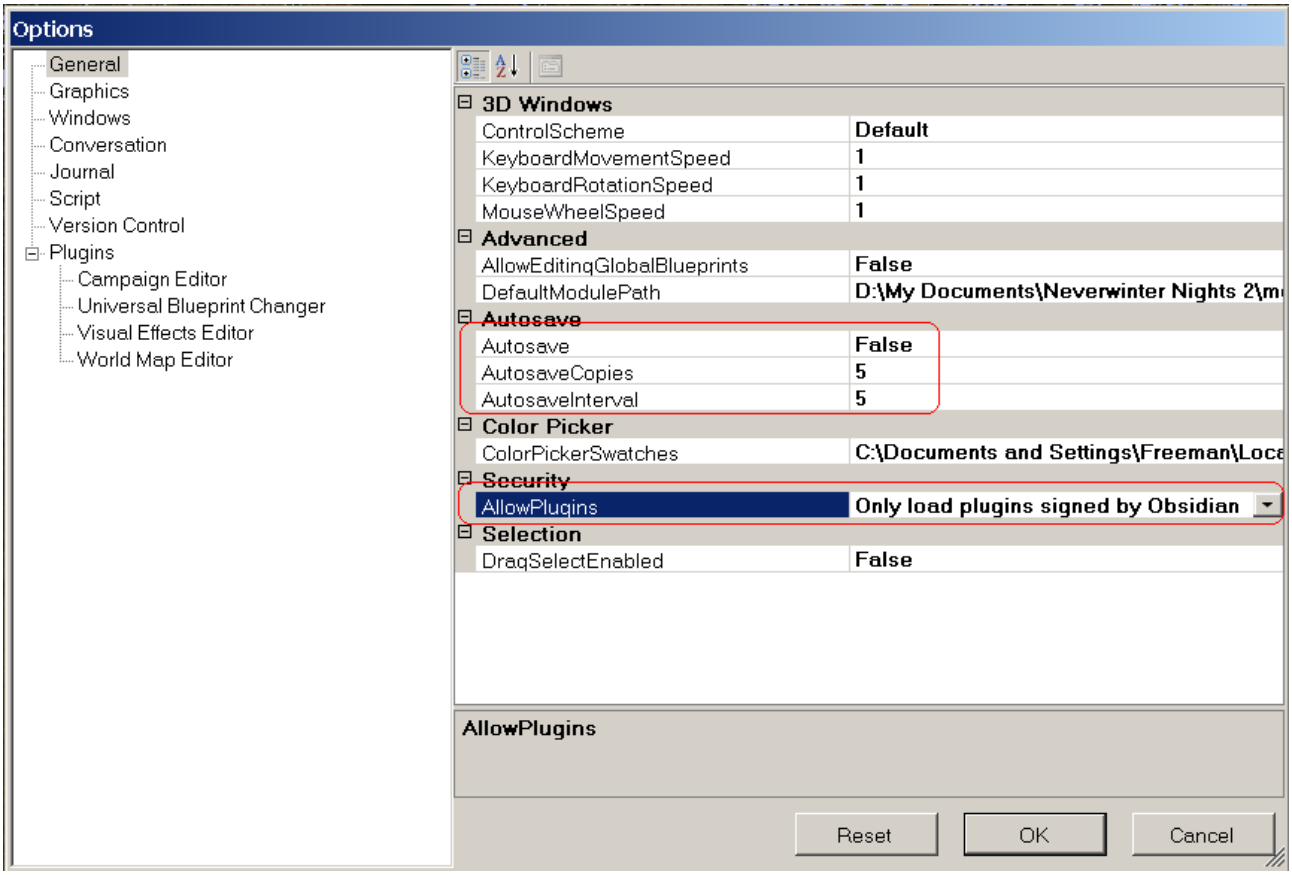
Make sure there is **not a tick** in this box. Now you should be able to see whether it is an .exe or .dll file.

If you don't like this setting, you can always change it back afterwards (Just put a tick back in the box).

The next step is to go into the toolset and click on View > Options:



This will bring up the options for the toolset:



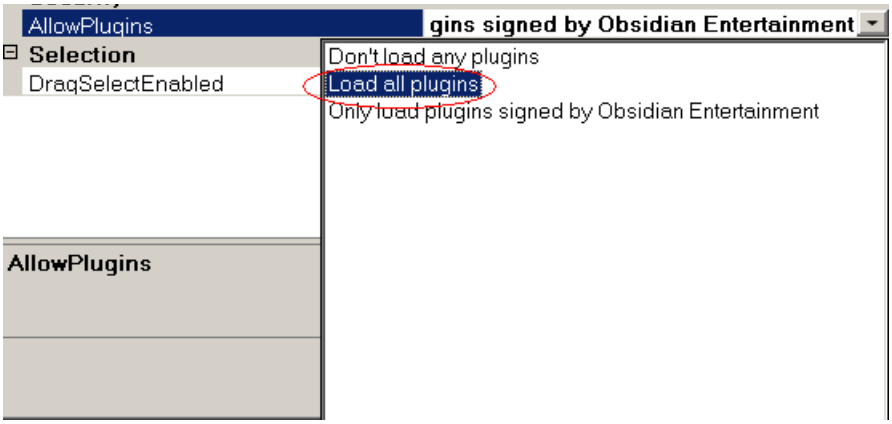
The option I brought you here for is the 'Allow Plugins', under 'Security' (which I'll get to on the next page). But while we're here, you may want to have a look at the other options. A lot of these options are better controlled by the buttons on the toolbar. For example, 'DragSelectedEnabled' is the same as the 'Drag Selected' button on the toolbar:

(Having this option on lets you select a bunch of placeables by dragging a green box around them with your left mouse button).

However, you may want to change the Autosave options here. You can change how often the toolset Autosaves your work (by changing AutosaveInterval, in minutes), or turn it off completely (by

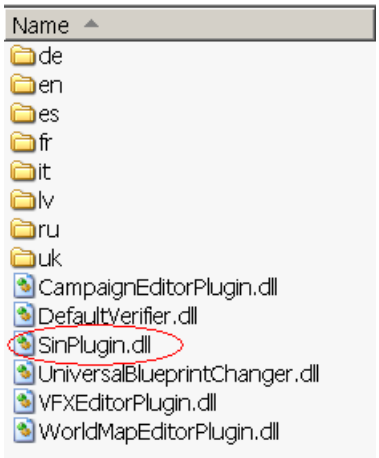
changing Autosave to False, as I have done). Autosaving is handy if the toolset crashes, as you can recover some of your work. However, unless your computer is worth more than my car (actually, not that hard), autosaving will interrupt your work for quite a long period of time as it saves - which I found very annoying. It's entirely your choice – what annoys you more – being interrupted or losing work?

But back to why I brought you here. By default 'Allow Plugins' is set so that the toolset will only load plugins that Obsidian has signed off on. But we want to include a community plugin, so we want to click on the drop down arrow here and choose 'Load all plugins':



Once you've changed that, click 'OK' and then quit the toolset.

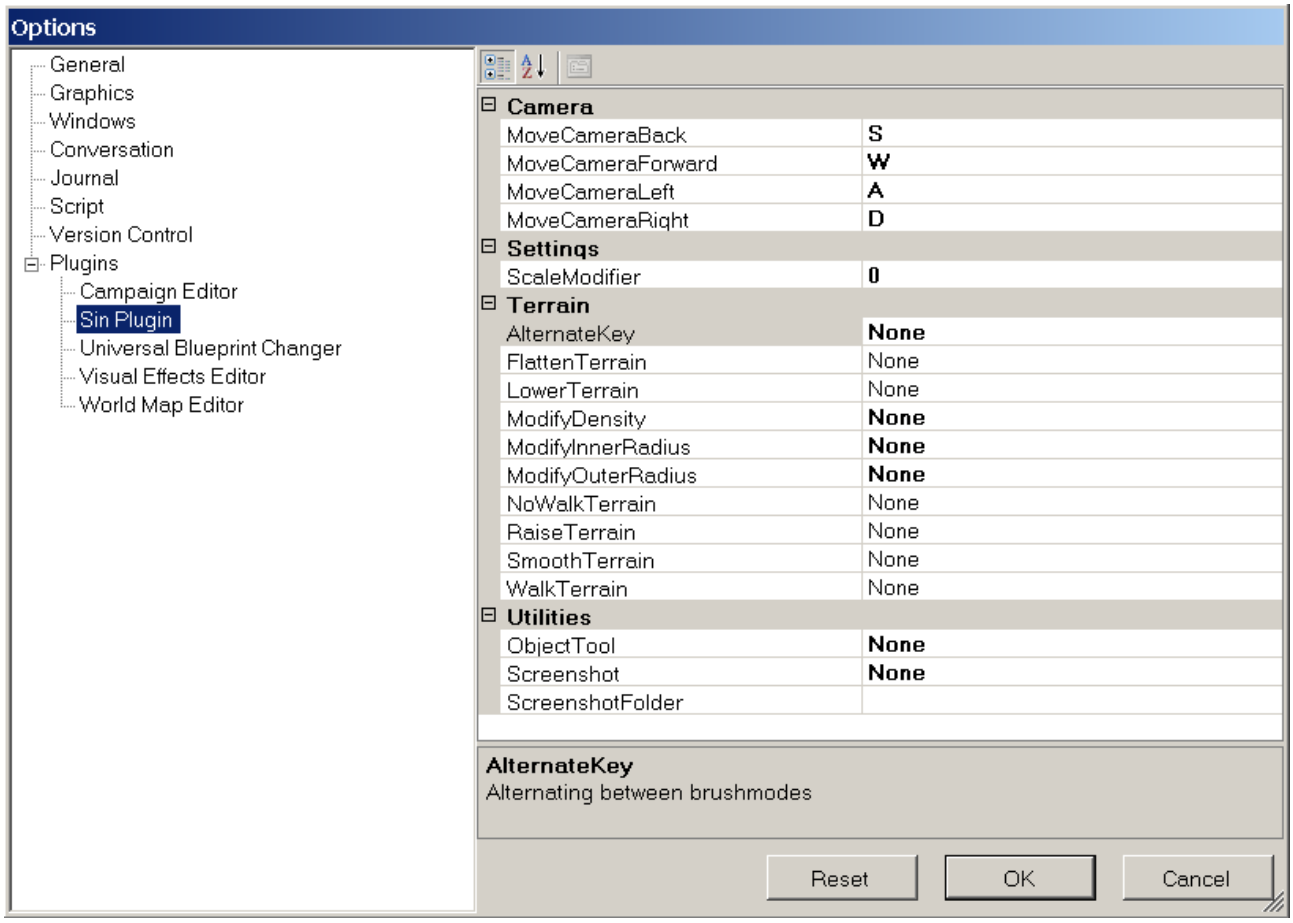
To install the plugin, we then want to copy over the SinPlugin.dll file to the right directory. This is in the folder you installed the toolset to. Then click on the folder 'NWN2Toolset', and then 'Plugins'. You'll notice there are a couple of other .dll files here already – these are the plugins that we looked at in the 'Plugins' menu. Copy the 'SinPlugin.dll' file here:



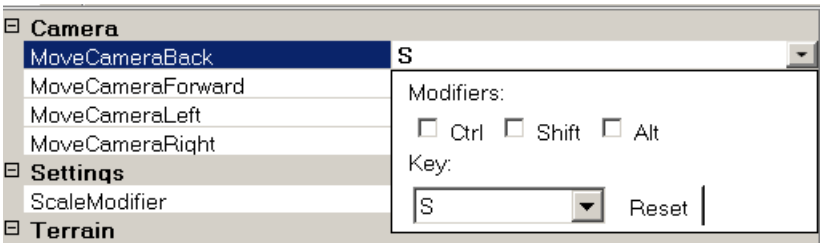
And the plugin is installed! Any plugin you want to try out, just copy the .dll file into this folder.

Now we can open up the toolset again and have a look at what this plugin does.

In the toolset, go to View > Options, and then select 'SinPlugin' on the left:



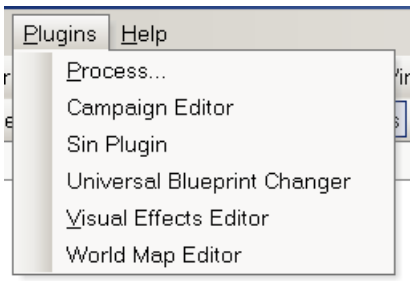
On the right, you can see you have options to create 'hotkeys' to do some functions – like move the camera or change terrain tools. For now, I just want you to look at the first section – 'Camera'. Here, you can tell the toolset to move the camera using the keyboard rather than the tricky default 'CTRL and drag' method. As you can see, I've chosen the W,A,S,D keys for up, left, down and right. You can assign whatever you like. Just click on the dropdown arrow for the direction you want to change:



Now choose the key you want from the drop down list. If you're confident, feel free to enter in keys for the other Terrain, Settings or Utilities options.

When you're done, click 'OK' out of the options screen.

The last step to get it working is to go back to the Plugins menu and select 'Sin Plugin' from the list:



Nothing visible will happen, but 'Sin Plugin' will be loaded and ready to go! You will have to do this last step whenever you load the toolset to get the camera controls working.

Let's try it out. Open up the test area with the oak tree and church. (Click on the Areas tab and choose 'Test Area').

Now try using the W,A,S,D keys (or whatever keys you entered) to move the camera round. Nice, hmmm?

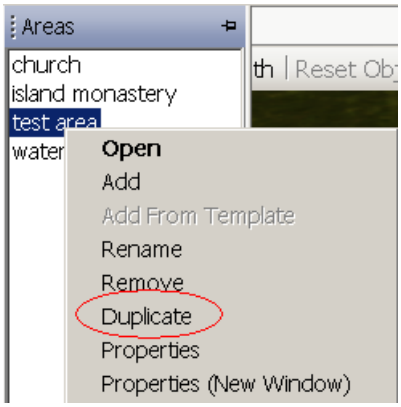
Kudos to WizShade/DigitalSin. This plugin will make life so much easier when building and painting terrain. So without further ado...

3.2 Terrain tools

This section was written with the generous help of Vance McFadyen

One more before we begin ... *** There is no undo function for the terrain tools *** In fact, judging by the forums, no one has managed to get the undo button to do anything particularly useful. So, it is important to create a copy of your area before you begin playing around with it, in case you want to revert back to the original.

To do this, right click 'test area' in the areas box and select 'Duplicate':

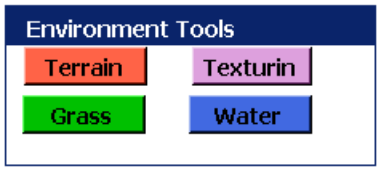


It will give it a name like 'test area1'. You now have a backup that you can go to if you stuff it up. If you decide you don't need the backup, just right click it and select 'Remove'.

If you do stuff up, you can delete 'test area' and rename 'test area1' back to 'test area'. Then you're ready to start again.

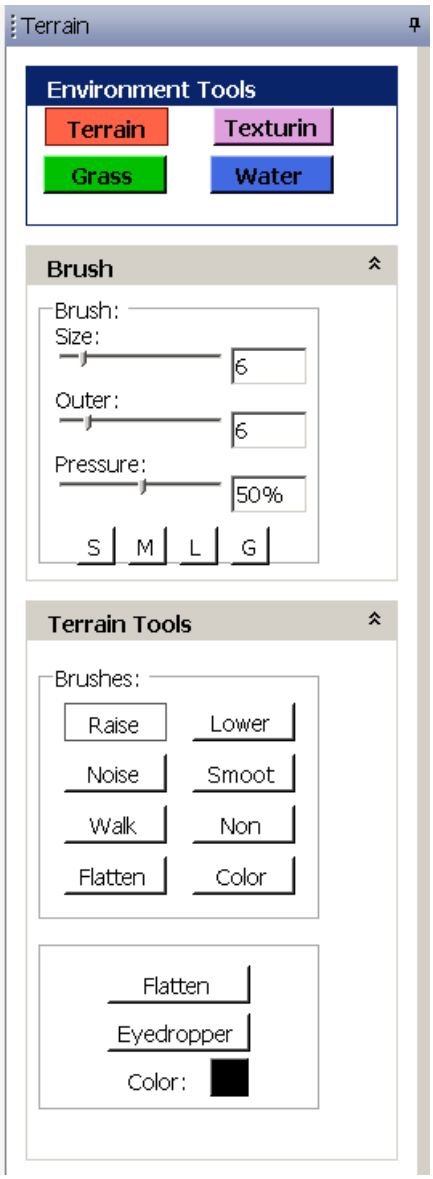
Time to paint some terrain! Click on the 'Terrain' tab, and click the pin icon to turn the tab into a proper window that will stay there:

You will see there are four sections in the Terrain menu:



We'll start with the first one, Terrain.

Click on the 'Terrain' button, and you'll get two boxes, “Brush” and “Terrain Tools”:



Let's start with the Terrain Tools box. This contains ten “brushes”.

Raise: Using this brush will raise land.

Lower: Will lower land (surprise!).

Noise: This brush will make flat surfaces more bumpy and interesting.

Smooth: This will make land smoother, smoothing over bumpy bits and sharp edges.

Walk: Is for painting down areas where the player can walk.

Non: Short for Non-walking, this is for painting down areas where the player **can't** walk.

Flatten: Will level land out at a particular height. When you click on Flatten, you will notice the 'Pressure' brush property changes to height – here you can set the height you want the land to be flat at. A very handy tool for creating an area with flat pieces of land at different heights (like terraces). I perhaps use this brush the most.

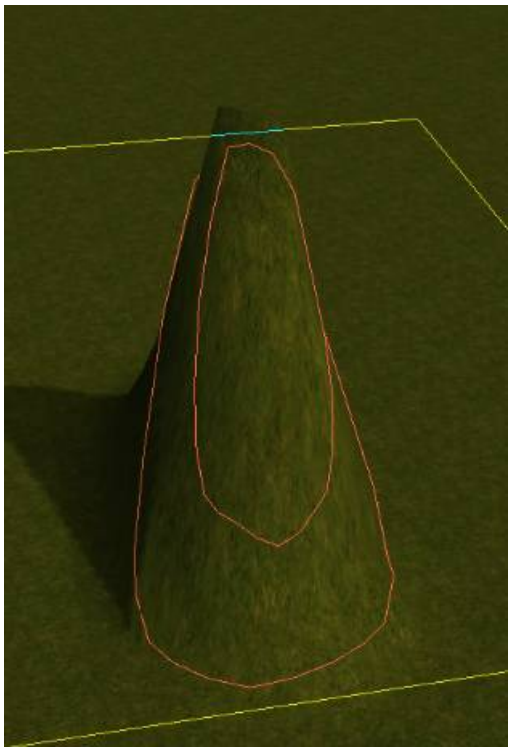
Color: Changes the default green to a colour of your choice – you could choose a darker green for a swamp, or black to create patches of scorched ground in a battlefield. If you want to go back to the default green, use the colour white as an eraser. The colour box is down the bottom of the window, under 'Eyedropper'.

Flatten Under: This second 'Flatten' button is like the first, but designed to be used to flatten the ground underneath a building to get everything sitting right. To use this, select the building and click the button. The ground underneath it will flatten to match the bottom of the building.

Eyedropper: To be used in conjunction with flatten: use the eyedropper to select the height you want to flatten at.

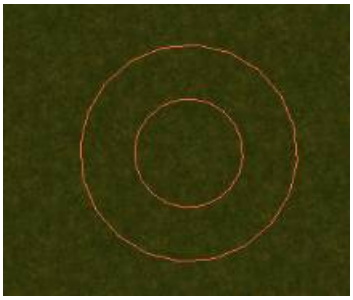
Don't worry, we'll go through them one at a time. We'll start with 'Raise' – so select this button.

Move the mouse over a spot on the 'Test Area' map (the outside one with the oak and church) and hold down the left mouse button. Watch the mountain rise out of the ground!



Now, look at the top box in the Terrain window – 'Brushes'. There are three properties of brushes that affect what happens when you paint: Size, Outer and Pressure.

To understand the first two, look at your cursor:



It is made up of two circles. The smaller, inside circle shows the area where your brush will have the most effect. The bigger, outside circle is the area that will be *lightly* brushed.

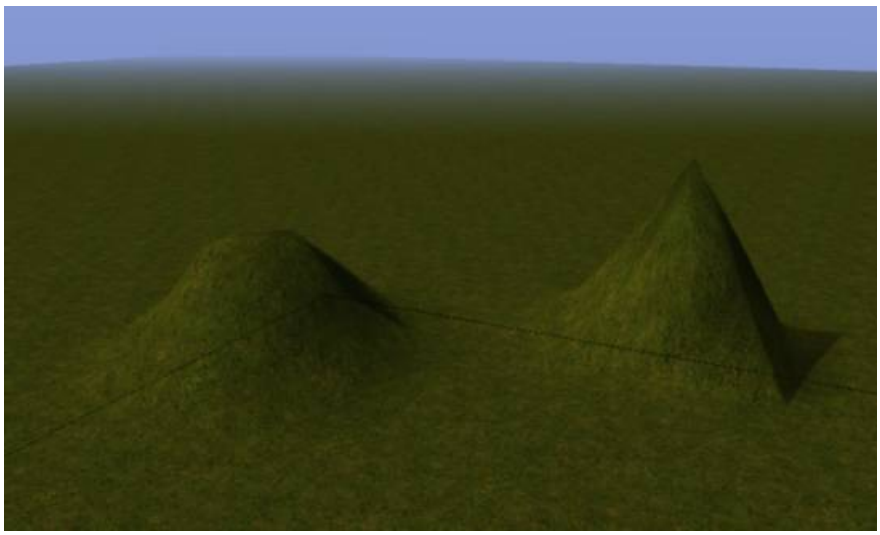
'Size' is the size of the smaller circle.

'Outer' is the size of the bigger circle.

Size

Let's do an experiment: Set 'Size' to 6 and 'Outer' to 6. Then left click on the map and create a hill.

Now, change 'Size' down to 2. Create a second hill on the map next to the first one. They should look something like this:



(Screenshot courtesy of Vance McFadyen)

See how the first one has a flat top, while the second one is sharp. The smaller the size, the sharper the hill.

Outer

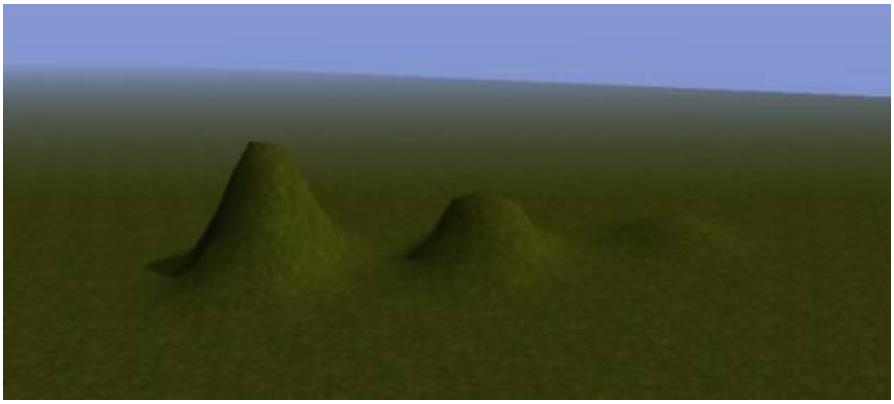
Experiment number two. Change 'Size' back to '6' and set 'Outer' to 6. Paint a small hill. Then change 'Outer' down to '1' and paint a second hill next to it. It should look like this:

See how the hill on the left, the one with an 'Outer' of 6, is wider than the hill on the right, which has an 'Outer' of 1?

Vance has recommended setting the 'Outer' to double what 'Size' is – so if 'Size' is 3, set 'Outer' to 6. This looks nice. But play around with 'Size' and 'Outer' to get the terrain looking how you like.

Pressure

The third property, 'Pressure', is the **strength** of the effect on the terrain. The higher the pressure, the greater the effect. Take a look at another of Vance's screenshots:



(Screenshot courtesy of Vance McFadyen)

All three hills were made with 'Size' of 6 and 'Outer' set at 6. However, for the first hill, on the left, pressure was set to 100%. For the middle hill, 50%, and for the third hill, 10%.

> ***'Pressure' is very important – it will heavily control the final effect!***
>
> Also, ***the longer you hold down the left mouse button, the more effect the brush will have***. So hold down the button for strong effects, and just click the button for fine tuning terrain.

Notice the S, M, L and G buttons below these sliders. These stand for 'Small', 'Medium', 'Large' and 'Giant'. They are pre-set brush sizes that you can switch to easily. Click on each one in turn, and see what they set the 'Size' and 'Outer' sliders to.

Let's try making some background hills. Firstly, make sure the 'Grid' button in the toolbar is set to on:

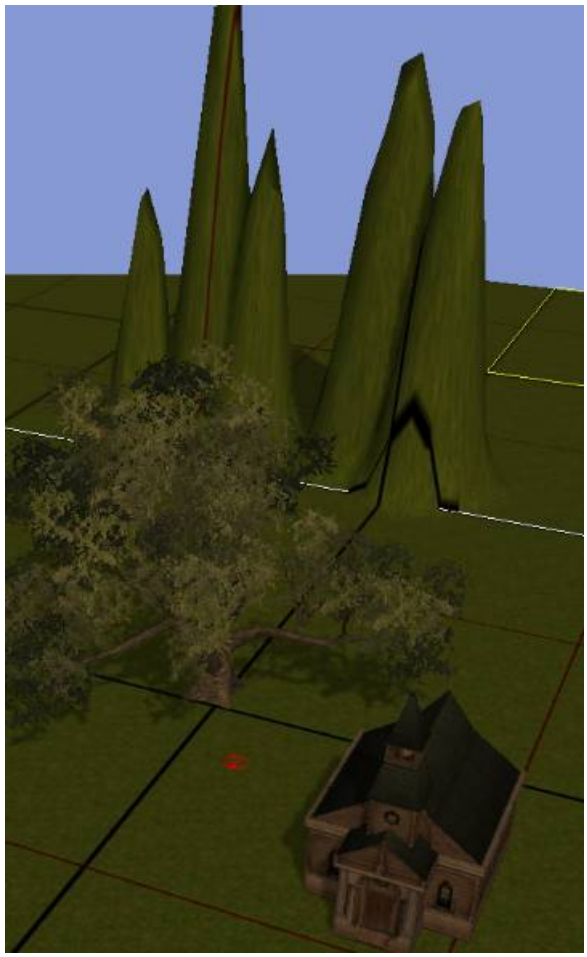
Now have a look at the white grid lines on your map:

You may remember from the first session that the player can only walk around **inside** this white box. So the oak tree and the church should be inside the box (if they are not, just move them to a space inside the box). The outside of the box is just for background – decoration.

Note. Switching between painting and selecting terrain works the same as with placeables. Click on 'Paint Terrain' to start painting terrain. I often accidentally de-selected this by right-clicking. So if you can't paint, make sure this is selected in the toolbar:

Have a practice using the 'Raise' brush to create hills behind the church, outside the white box.

Here's mine:



Awful, I know. But we're still just practising. Now, let's try the 'Lower' brush. Let's build a big hole in the ground that we'll fill with water later on.

Select the 'Lower' button and left click on the terrain in front of the tree and the church to start digging. Play around with 'Size', 'Outer' and 'Pressure'.

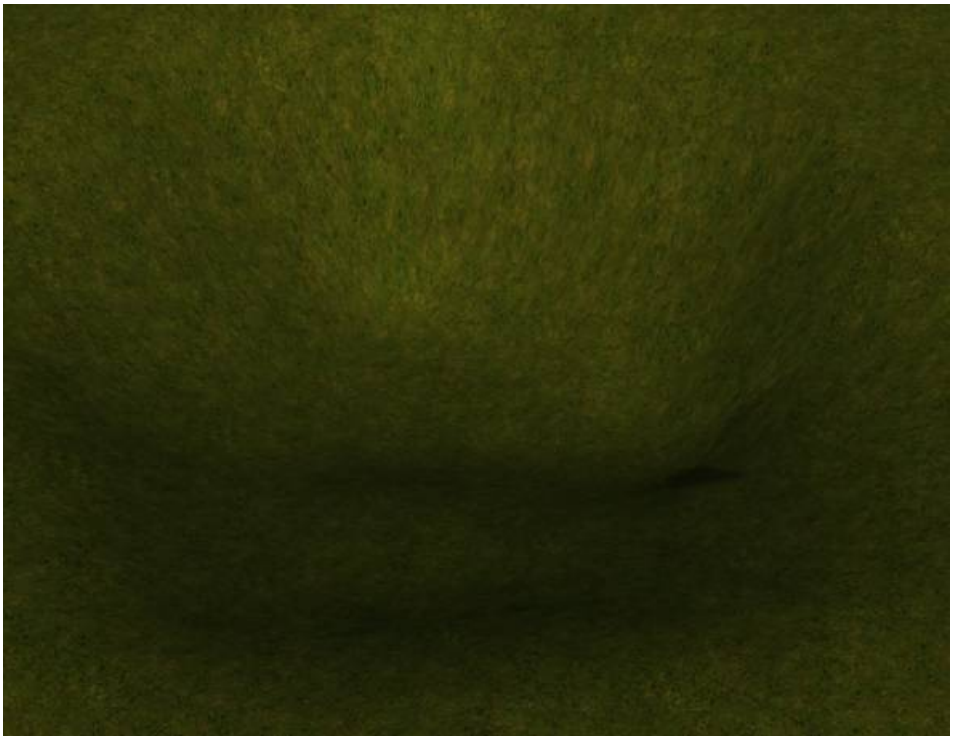
Here's my attempt:

Looks more like a meteor crater than a lake at the moment, but we can fix that later.

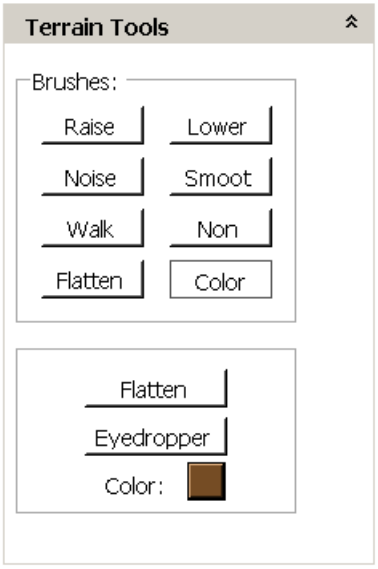
Now let's try the noise brush. Click on the 'Noise' button and paint it down on a blank area. Move the cursor around a bit and watch the ground become bumpy:

Quite a nice effect. Now let's try the 'Smooth' brush. Choose this and reduce the pressure to something gentle, like 10%. Paint it gently over your hills. You should see the jagged edges smooth over and look smoother and nicer.

Here you can see it's smoothed out my lake and made it look a lot nicer:

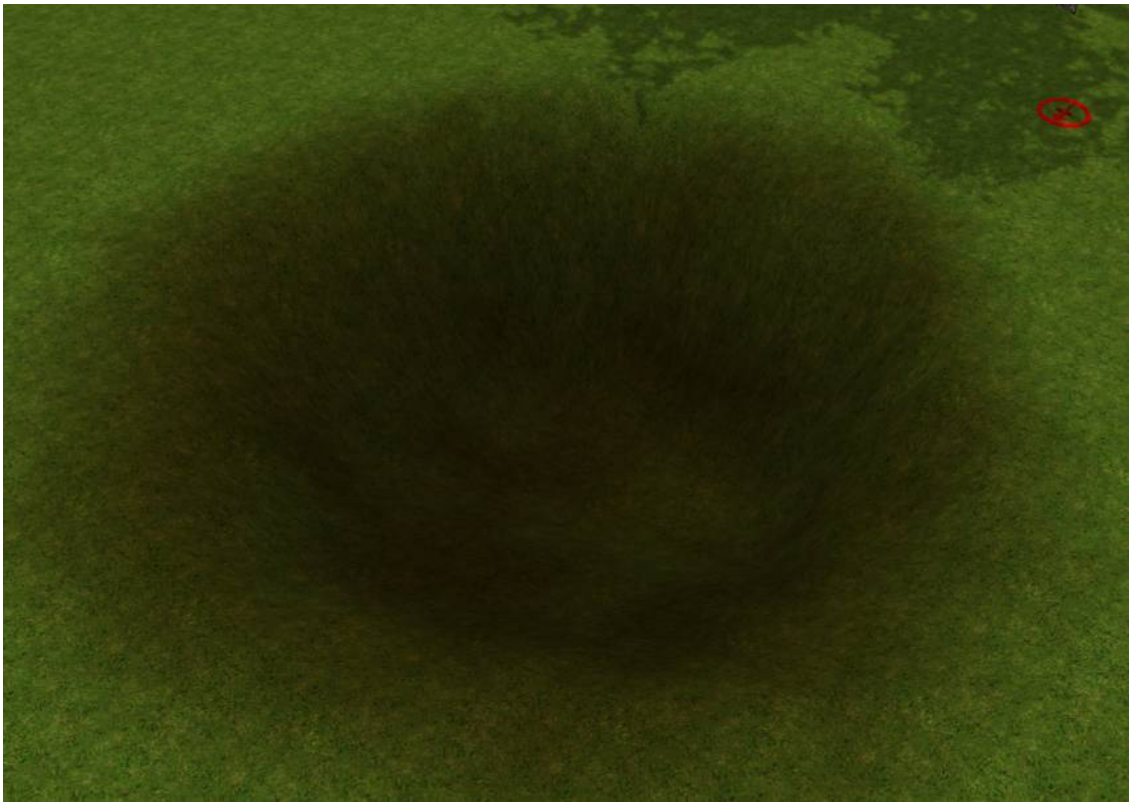


Let's now select the 'Color' brush and click on the 'Color' box to change the colour to brown:

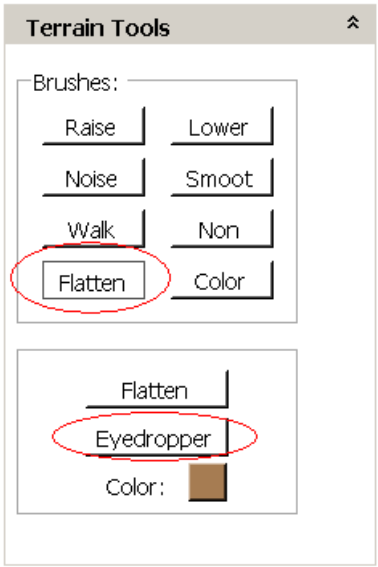


Reduce the 'Pressure' to about 25%. Then colour in the hole, including a little bit of the flat ground around it.

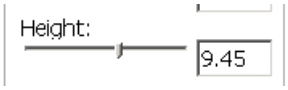
This will help the lake look muddy when it's finished. For the final touches, I selected a lighter shade of brown, reduced the brush 'Size' and 'Outer' down to 3 and painted around the rim, for a lighter shade of mud around the edges of the lake:



To try flattening, move back over to some empty space by your hills. Select the 'Flatten' brush. Notice how the 'Pressure' property has changed to 'Height'. Now click on the 'Eyedropper' button:



Move your cursor over to a spot halfway up one of your hills and left click. You should see the 'Height' number change:



I've chosen a spot that is about 9.45 metres high (a human is about 2 high, so I think of these measurements as metres – sorry to those using feet and inches!).

Now left click on an empty spot of map, and it should create a flat plateau 9.45 metres high:

Using 'Flatten' with a height of '0' is also a good eraser (0 is ground level). Manually type in 0 into the 'Height' box and flatten this plateau back down to the ground.

Vance McFadyen suggests for nice looking mountains, you create a plateau at about 1 metre, then another one overlapping that a bit higher, and another one overlapping that a bit higher, until you reach the desired height. Then use the 'Smooth' brush with a pressure of about 10% to smooth it all over. An example final effect is shown here:

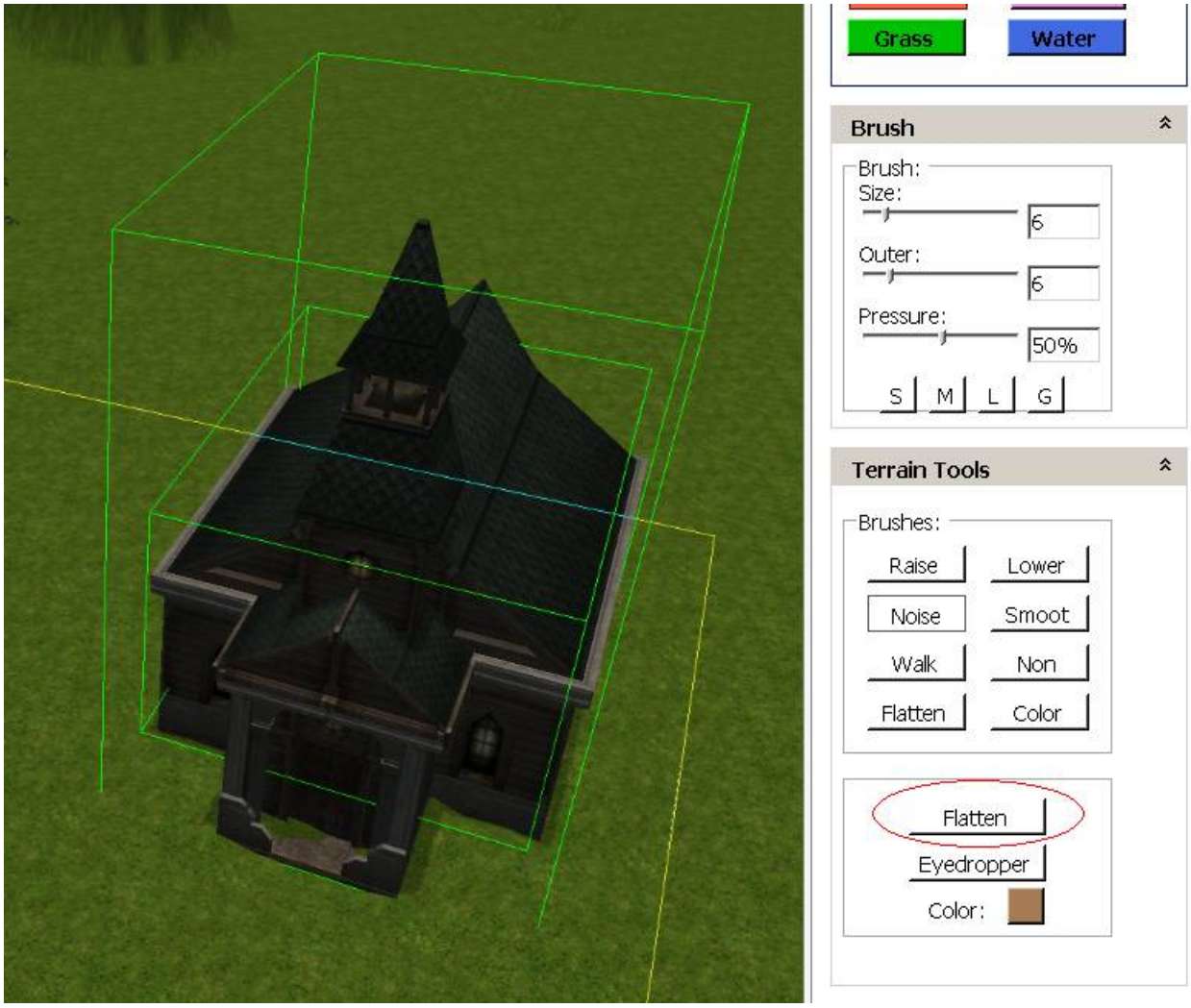
(screenshot courtesy of Vance McFadyen)

Pretty, isn't it? Definitely much better than my jagged mountains earlier.

We'll leave the walk and non-walk brushes until we discuss walkmeshes.

If you want to try the 'Flatten Under' button, move the church onto the rough bit of ground you made earlier with the 'Noise' brush.

Then select the church so it has the green box around it (you will need to click on the 'Select Objects' button before you can select the church) and press the 'Flatten' button above the 'Eyedropper' button:

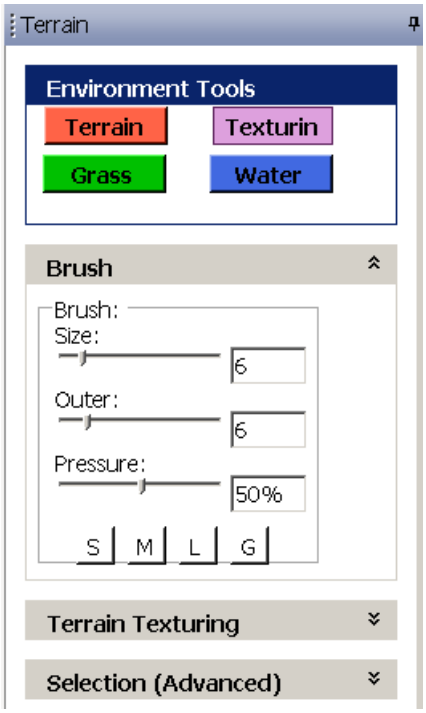


You will see the ground go completely flat underneath the church.

They take practice and patience, but these terrain tools are definitely worth it. Keep playing around with them until you're happy with the results.

3.3 Texturing

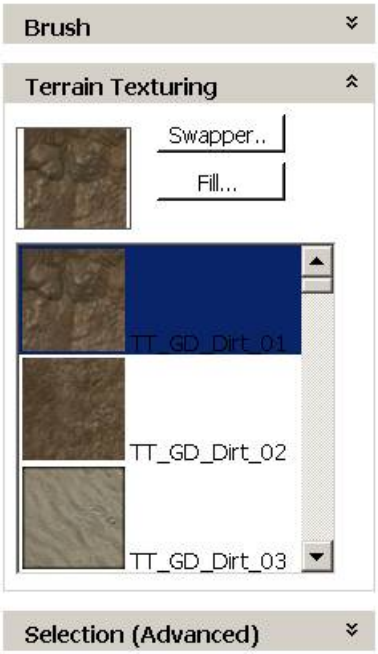
The next button to look at is 'Texturing', or, as it appears in my toolset, 'Texturin'!:



On this tab, you can see three boxes: 'Brush', 'Terrain Texturing' and 'Selection (Advanced)'. (I've got these last two collapsed at the moment – at any time, you can click on those double arrows to collapse or open a box)

'Brush' should look familiar to you – it is exactly the same as for the Terrain tools, with 'Size', 'Outer' and 'Pressure' sliders, and the Small, Medium, Large and Giant predefined values.

The next box, 'Terrain Texturing' is a list of the available textures, with a couple of extra buttons:

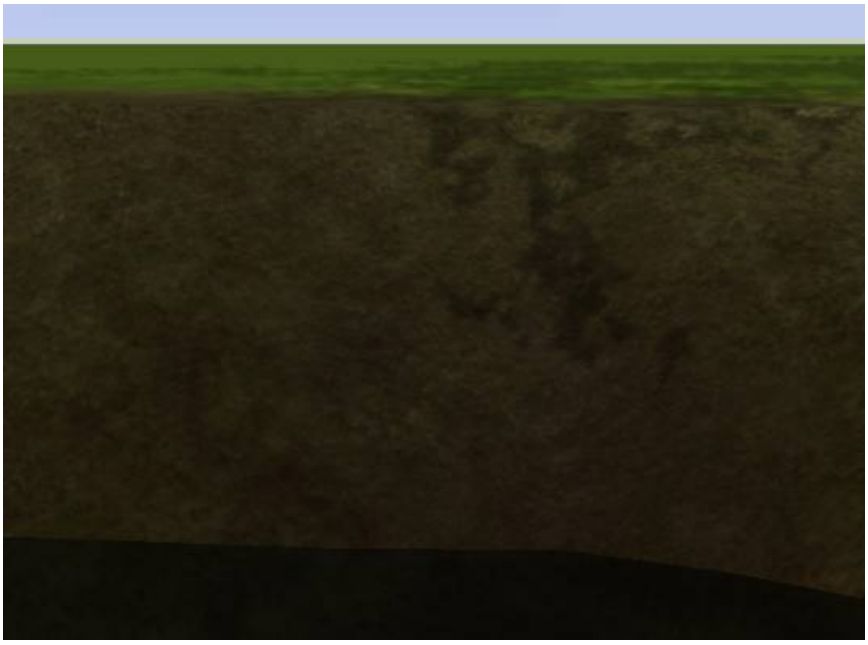


Scroll down through the list of textures and you will see dirt, grass, rocks, and even cobblestones!

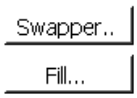
The basics of texturing are just like when we painted down the colour around the lake, except this time instead of painting just a simple colour, we're painting down a pattern called a texture, that makes it look like dirt or rocks or cobblestones.

So instead of colouring in the lake brown, we could have chosen one of the muddy looking dirt textures here and painted it with that. Let's try that now. I'm going to choose 'TT_GD_Dirt02':

You will have to zoom in very close to see what the texture looks like:



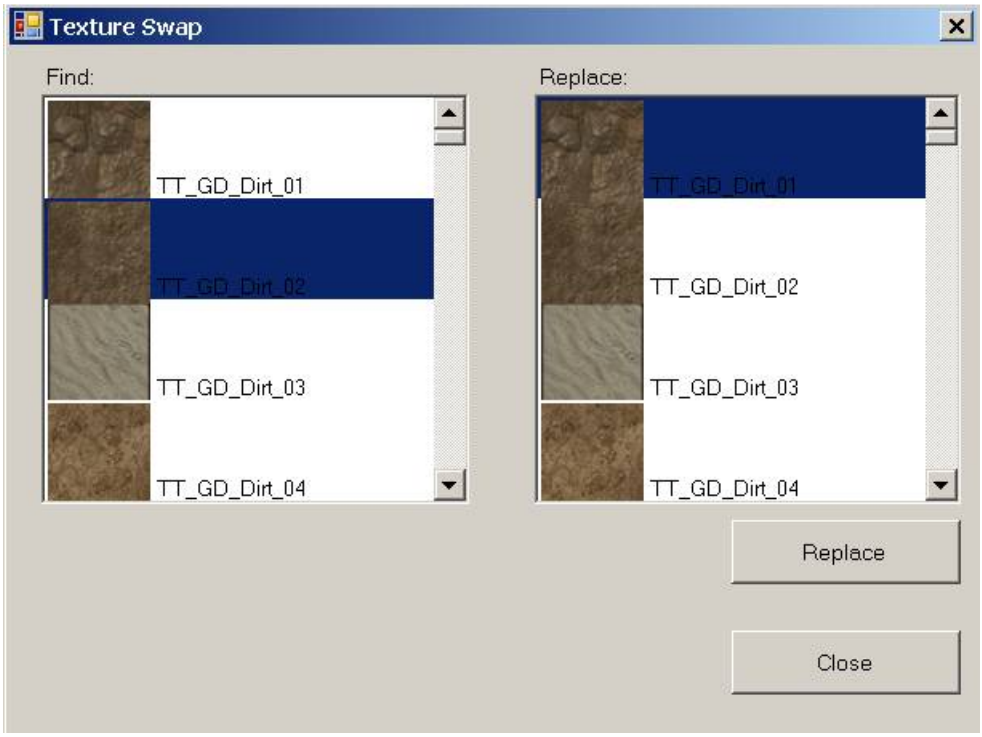
Notice there are two buttons above this list, 'Swapper...' and 'Fill...':



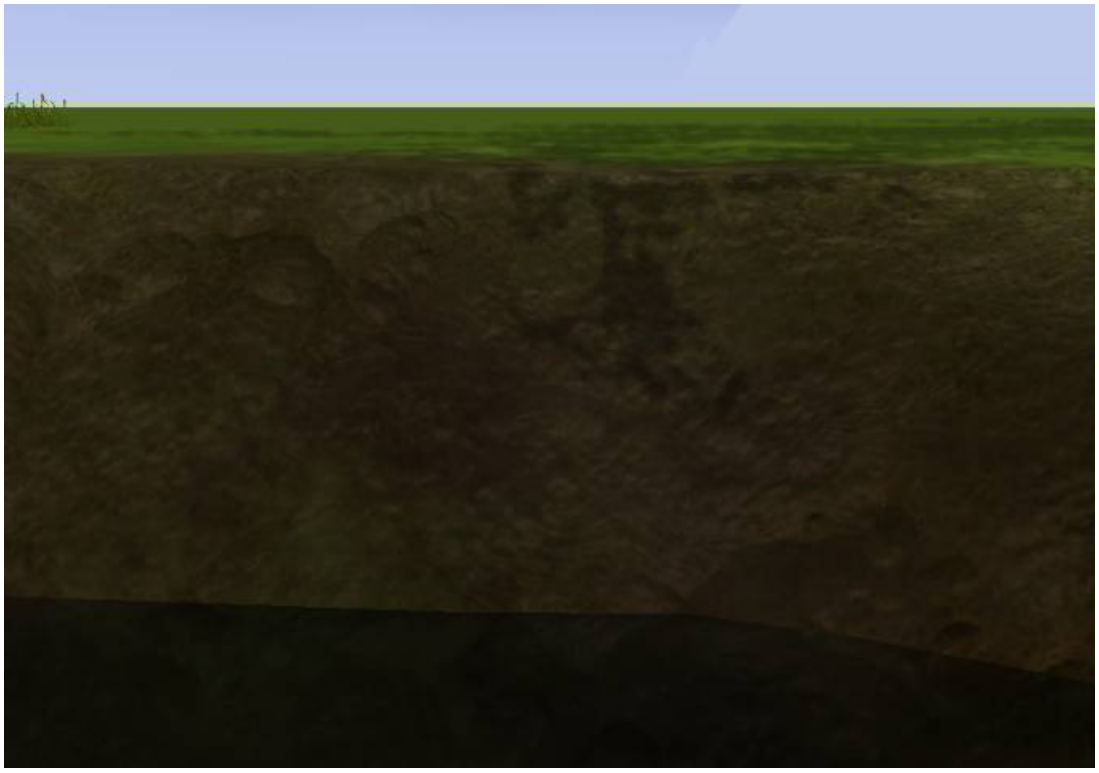
The 'Fill...' button is for filling your entire area with a texture, which may be a good starting point for areas like a rocky wasteland, where you don't want any of the default green grass. Just select the terrain texture you want from the list and click on the 'Fill...' button to fill your entire area.

The 'Swapper...' button acts like a find and replace for textures. So if you want to see what it would look like if we'd selected 'TT_GD_Dirt01' instead of 'TT_GD_Dirt02', click on this button.

The Find and Replace Texture screen will come up:



Choose the old texture on the left ('TT_GD_Dirt02') and the new texture on the right ('TT_GD_Dirt01'). Click 'Replace' and then view the results:



I like this texture better, so I'm going to leave it as this one.

Now let's look at the last box: 'Selection (Advanced)':

This lists all the terrains you have currently used *on the tile you are working on*. When you're working on exterior areas, the toolset thinks in terms of the **current tile** – this applies to water and grass as well. You can see tile borders by clicking on the 'Grid' button in your toolbar and looking at the black lines. As you can see from the number of boxes, you can use up to six textures on any one tile.

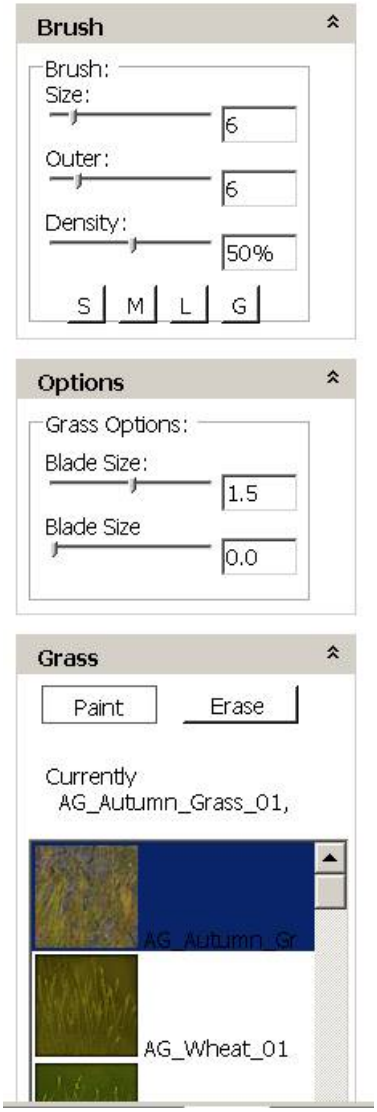
> *Textures make the computer (to be more exact, the video card) do a lot of work.* That's why the number of textures you can use are limited. **Don't go overboard with textures.** The more you use, the worse people's computers will perform in that area.

In the list above, you can see the default green grass texture and the dirt texture we just painted down. You can select textures from this list and use them to paint.

Next up is grass, another way of adding nice detail to your area. The grass textures are really two dimensional (flat) pictures, whereas using the 'Grass' tools will add proper, three dimensional grass to the area.

3.4 Grass

Click on the 'Grass' button and you will see there are three boxes to do with grass, 'Brush', 'Options' and 'Grass'



Under 'Brush' are the familiar properties of 'Size', 'Outer' and, instead of 'Pressure', 'Density'. 'Density' really works the same as 'Pressure' – the higher the percentage, the heavier it will paint the grass down.

Under 'Options', we can set the size of the blades of grass (again, think of it as being in metres, with humans in the game being about 2m high). The second 'Blade Size' is actually how much variation there will be in the grass – setting it high will produce natural looking grass of different lengths, while setting it to zero will result in perfectly even grass.

The third box lets you choose the type of grass you want to paint down – if you look, you can see that there's also wheat, reeds, flowers and cattails.

> **Note.** You can select more than one type of grass at once. It will mix in the different types as you paint.

As before, once you have made your choices, hold down the left mouse button and move around the cursor to paint down the grass.

This is my first attempt, with a 'Density' of '50%', 'Blade Size' set to 0.872, blade size variation to '0.81', and 'AG_Grass_01' selected:

If you don't like what you've done, you can always use the 'Erase' button to erase it:

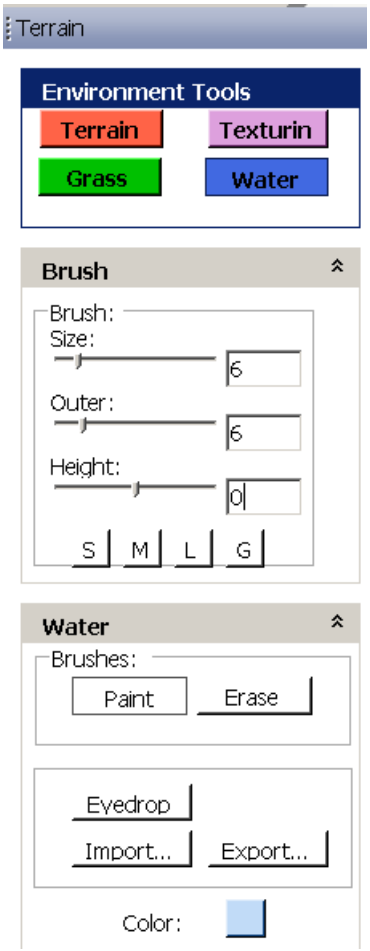
Just click on the button and 'paint' over the grass you want to delete.

Have a play around and add some different types of grass to the area.

> **Note.** Similar to textures, grass can have an impact on performance, so there are limits on grass as well. Just don't go crazy.

3.5 Water

Now let's fill our hole with water to make it a lake. Click on the water button:



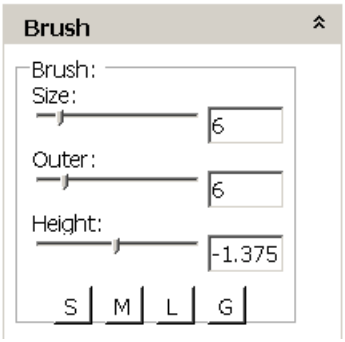
You'll see the now very familiar brush properties ('Size', 'Outer' and 'Height') along with the Small, Medium, Large and Giant presets, and below them, two brushes: 'Paint' and 'Erase'. Use the 'Paint' brush to place down water, and 'Erase' to delete water.

'Size' and 'Outer' aren't very important with water, because you're usually filling an area you've predefined, but 'Height' is crucial. A 'Height' of zero looks no good. But you'll see there's another 'Eyedrop' button:

Click this button and click on the bank of your lake where you would like the water level to be.

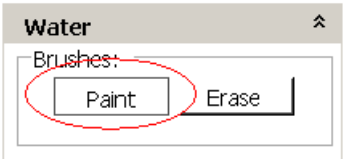
About '-1' looks right.

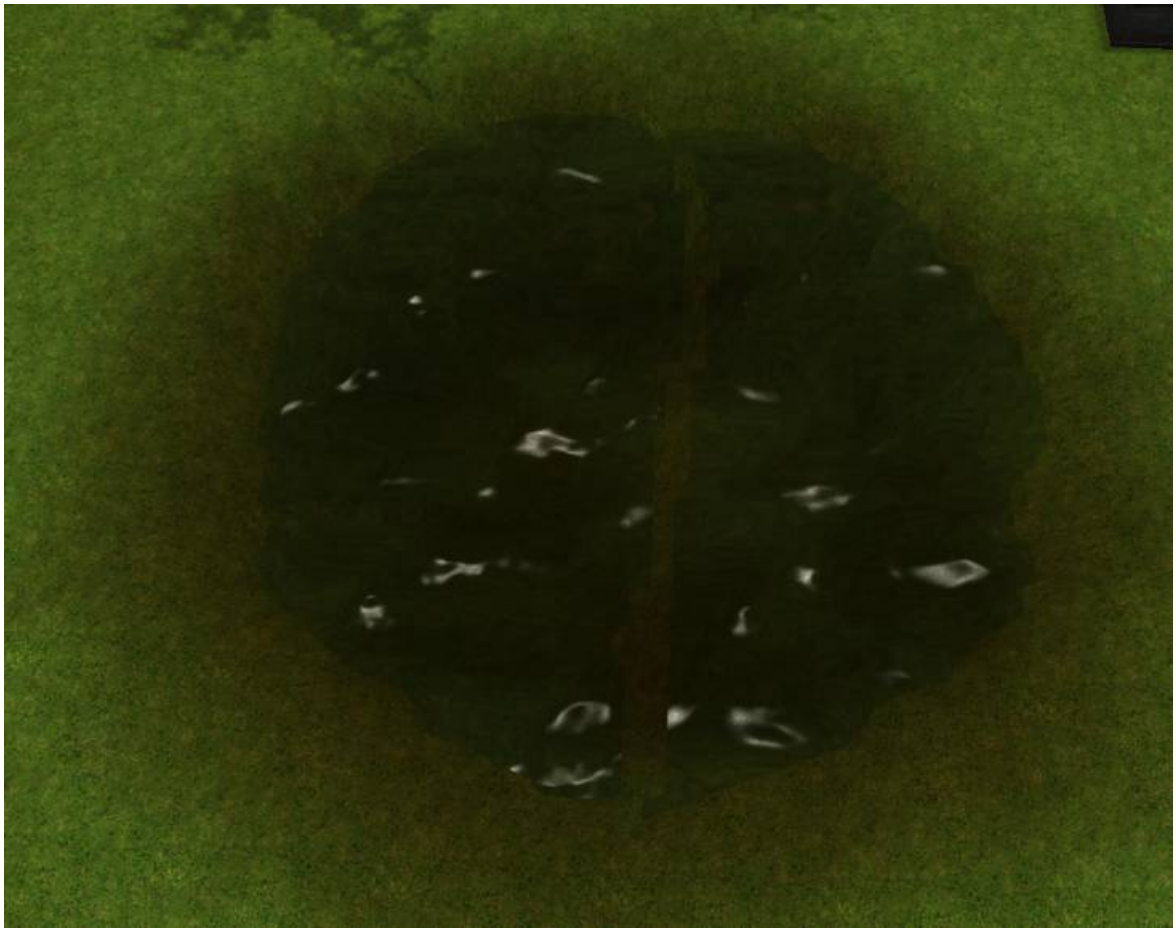
This is what I ended up with:



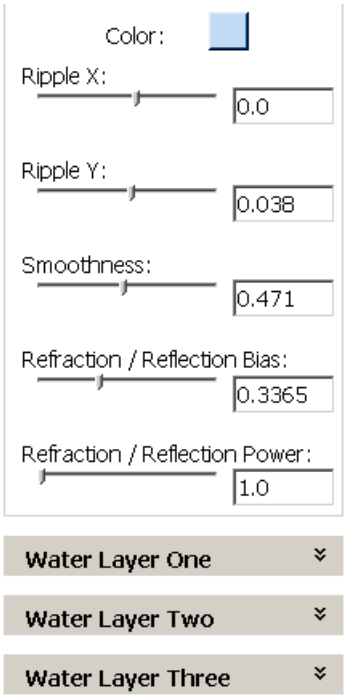
Below the 'Eyedrop' button is a raft of options and Import... and Export... buttons. Let's give the default settings a try first.

Once you've selected a good height, click on the 'Paint' button and place down some water in your hole:





It looks pretty good just with the default options. But lets take a look at those options now:



You've got a box full of sliders, and three water layers to play with (that I've currently got collapsed)

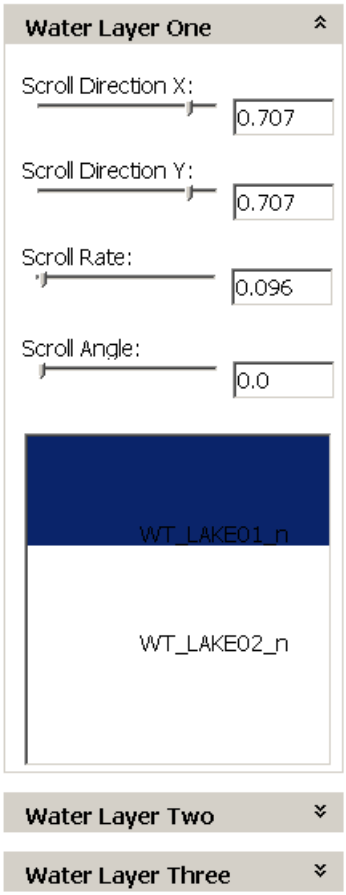
First up is the colour of the water. Click on the box to change the colour to something else. Note, however, that the picture of the lake does not bear much resemblance to the selected light blue – so the result may be different to what you planned.

'Ripple X' and 'Ripple Y' controls the level of horizontal and vertical ripples. The higher the number, the more the water will ripple in that direction.

'Smoothness' is how much rippling and movement there is. Set it closer to zero for still water, and put it up to maximum for a violent sea.

'Refraction/Reflection Bias' and ' Refraction/Reflection Power' control how much is reflected in the water. Set the sliders higher for greater reflection in the water, and set to lower if you don't want reflective water (perhaps for dirtier water, like a swamp).

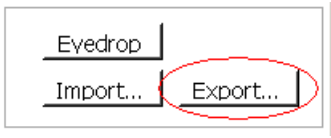
Now let's take a look at the first water layer. All three water layers have exactly the same options:



The Scroll options are very useful for creating rivers that you want to flow in a particular direction. You can control the direction with the 'Scroll Direction X' and 'Scroll Direction Y' sliders, how fast it flows with the 'Scroll Rate', and the angle it flows at with 'Scroll Angle'. You can find a good example of applying these tools in Veragoan's excellent waterfall tutorial, available here: http://nwvault.ign.com/View.php?view=NWN2Tutorials.Detail&id=1

Below these Scroll options, you have two textures to choose from. However, I have to confess to not being able to notice any difference between the two textures!

You have three layers of water with these options, so you can make some really complex effects. If you like what you have done, use the 'Export...' button to save those options:



Give the settings a file name that reflects what you've created, like 'Still lake' or 'Wavy sea'. Then you can use the 'Import...' button later to import these settings and paint down the same water.

To try some of these advanced effects, you can use the 'Erase' button to erase the water you've put in the lake, and then select 'Paint', change the settings to something that looks good, and paint it down.

* You need to select all the different settings **before** you paint down the water *

Now, I'm going to apply all the tools we've just talked about to make as nice a looking area as my artistic talent will allow. Here's a screenshot:

That's it for the section on the terrain tools. If you want to explore further, I'd recommend B.G.P. Hughes' tutorial here: http://www.dladventures.net/vB/showthread.php?t=3791

and Veragoan's waterfall tutorial here:
http://nwvault.ign.com/View.php?view=nwn2tutorials.Detail&id=1

or some of the video tutorials available here: http://nwvault.ign.com/View.php?view=Movies.List

3.6 Baking and walkmeshes

Again, the last thing we need to do before finishing off the area is to bake it.

This time, however, because we've got some hills and a lake, we should pay attention to the "walkmesh" before we bake.

> **The walkmesh controls where the player can walk, and where the player can't walk.**

To have a look at the walkmesh, click on the "Surface Mesh" button on the toolbar:

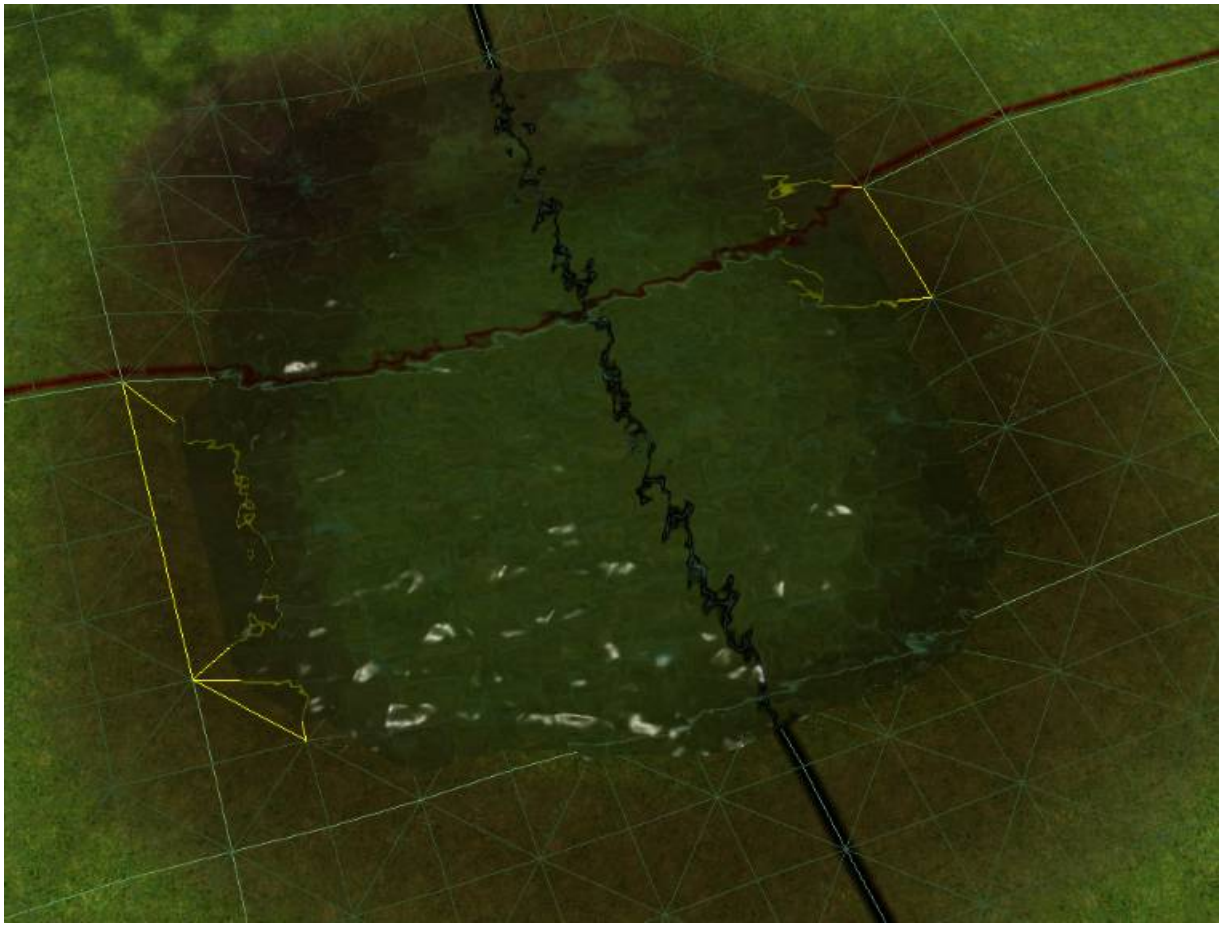
You'll see the mesh appear over your landscape:

The yellow lines separate the areas where the player can walk from the bits that the player can't walk over.

The walkable areas are covered in green lines, which you can barely see if you're using the default green grass.

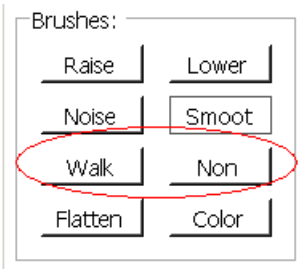
The non-walkable areas are covered in black lines. ***Everything outside the white box you can see when you have the grid turned on is not walkable – it is just there for you to create decorative backdrops.***

You can see in my area, there are some little bits in the lake that the player can't walk over, and little bits of the hill in the corner where the player can't walk over (because the slopes in those sections are too steep). However, currently the player can walk through most of the lake:

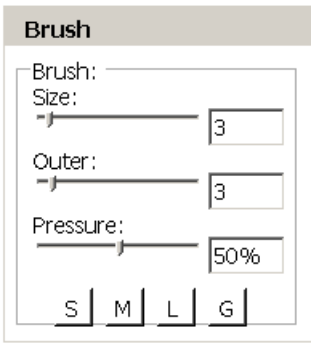


So let's fix that. Click on the 'Terrain' tab and then the 'Terrain' button – back to where the Raise, Lower, Flatten and other buttons were.

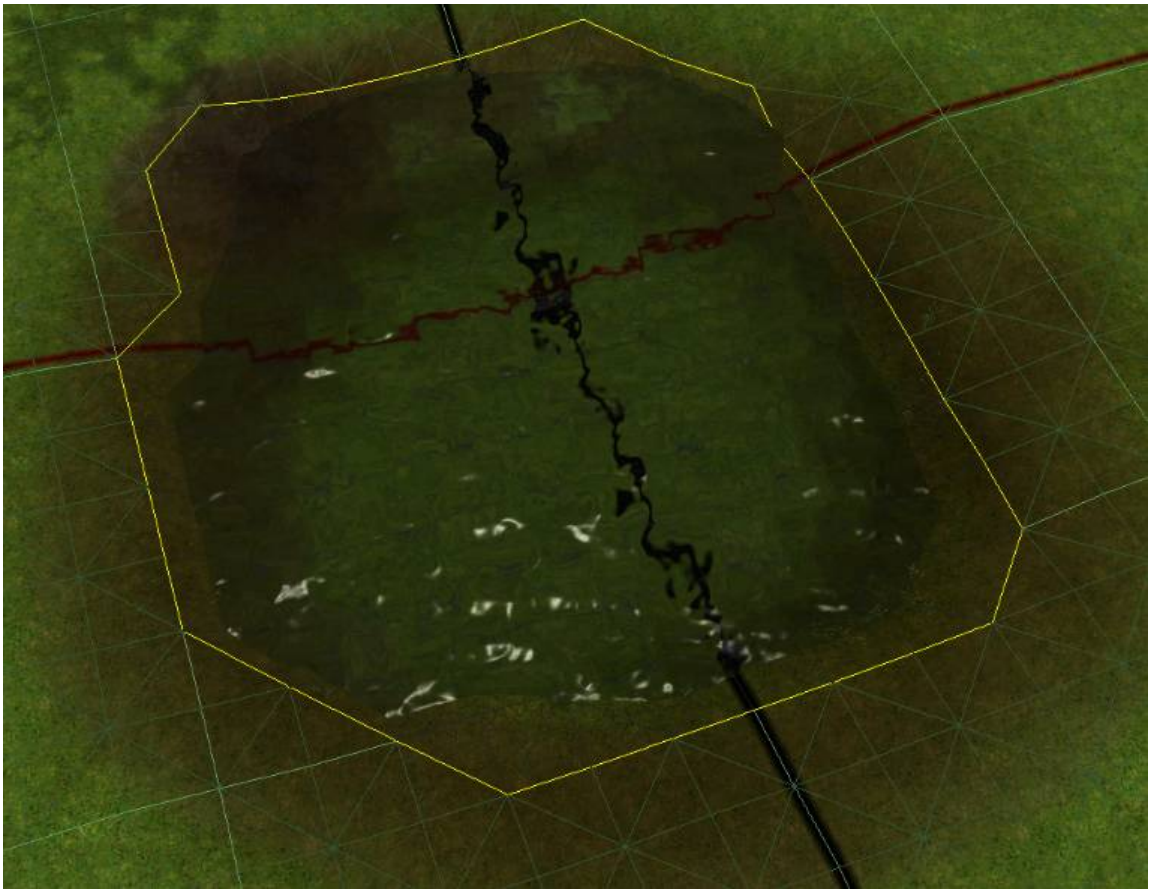
The two main tools you'll need to use to alter the walkmesh are found here: walk, and non-walk:



Use 'Walk' to place down walkable areas, and 'Non-walk' to place down areas where you don't want the player to be able to walk. We want to use 'Non-walk' at the moment. Choose that brush, and then reduce the 'Size' and 'Outer' of your brush to 3 or less, to make it less clumsy ('Pressure' doesn't matter):

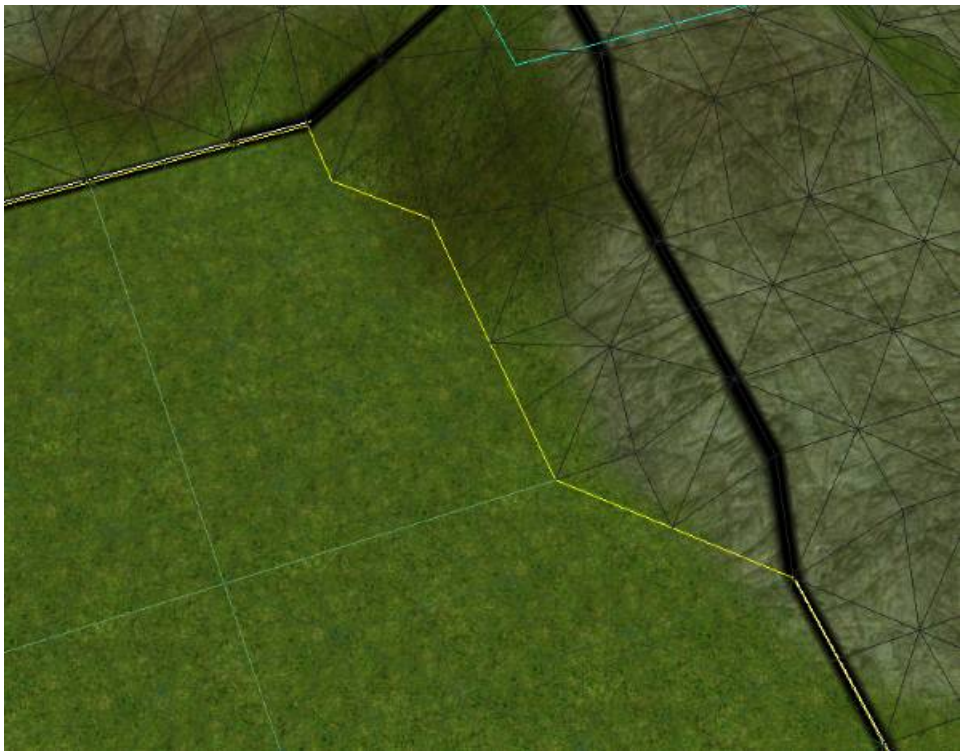


Then, making sure 'Paint Terrain' is selected in the toolbar, paint down non-walkable area over the lake. The final product should look something like this:



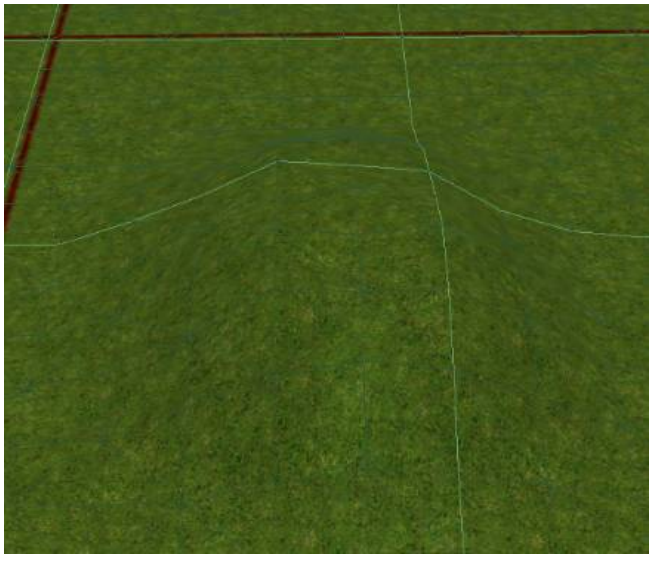
If you make a mistake and create non-walkable area outside of the lake, just fix it by using the 'Walk' brush.

The simpler the walkmesh, the better. So I'm also going to go over to that corner with the hills and fix that up:

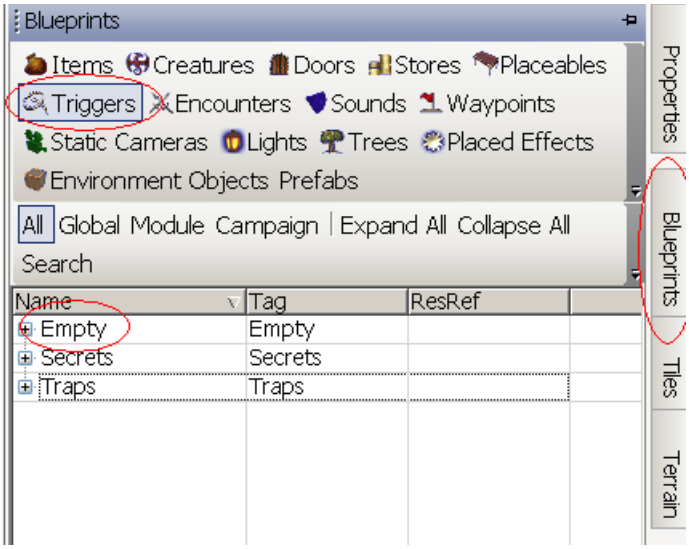


There, I've made the walkmesh a lot cleaner and simpler.

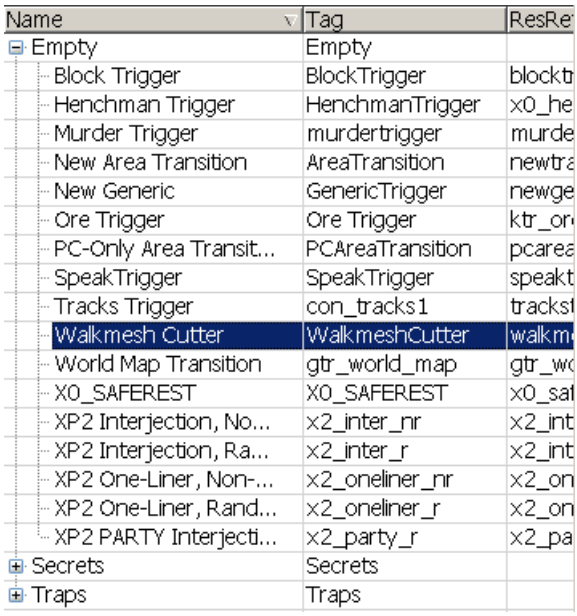
The last tool you may want to use is the 'Walkmesh cutter'. You may want to use this to create small patches of non-walkable area. I've created a small mound as an example:



Currently, this mound is walkable (which is fine, if you're happy for it to be walkable). To use the walkmesh cutter to make the mound non-walkable, click on the 'Blueprints' tab and then the 'Triggers' button:



Then click on the '+' next to Empty:

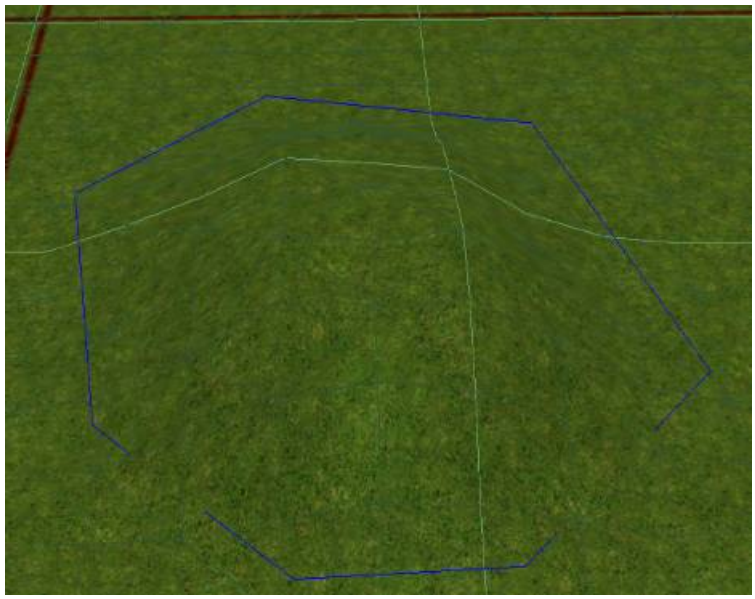


Select 'Walkmesh Cutter' from the list. To place the walkmesh cutter down, you're going to have to switch from 'Paint Terrain' back to 'Paint Objects' in the toolbar:

Now you can left-click on the map to start drawing the cutter area. Keep left clicking at different points around the mound and it will draw blue lines connecting up the points.

Here is my cutter half way through:

Just keep left clicking on points around the mound until you've created an enclosed area, like so:



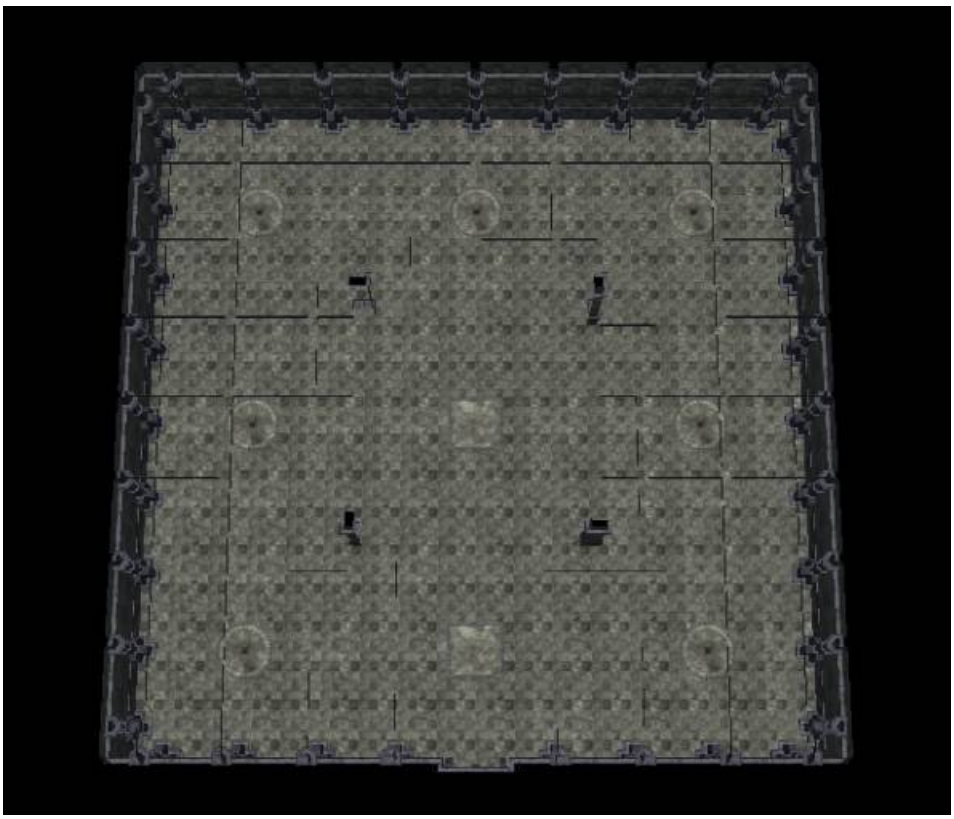
And it's done! The mound should now be non-walkable.

If you make a mistake, you can click on 'Select Objects' in the toolbar, select the cutter and hit the 'Delete' button on your keyboard to delete it, then start again.

Now that our walkmesh is ready, we can bake the area. Click on File > 'Bake Current Area'. Then save your work and congratulate yourself for learning these quite complex, but very powerful and very fun terrain tools. If you want, select 'File > Run module' and test out this area and inside the church. If you can use the door to get into the church, and outside again, you know the transition has worked.

Session 4

In our last session, we spent time making the exterior area nice, so this week we'll go back to the inside of the church and make that more interesting. Load up your module, click on the area tab, and open up the 'church' area. It should look something like this:

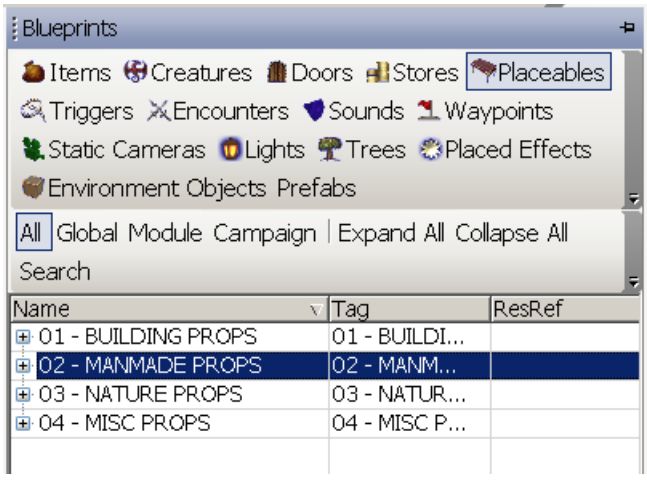


We'll start by placing down a treasure chest. Feel free to talk like Cap'n Jack Sparrow for this section.

4.1 Adding treasure chests

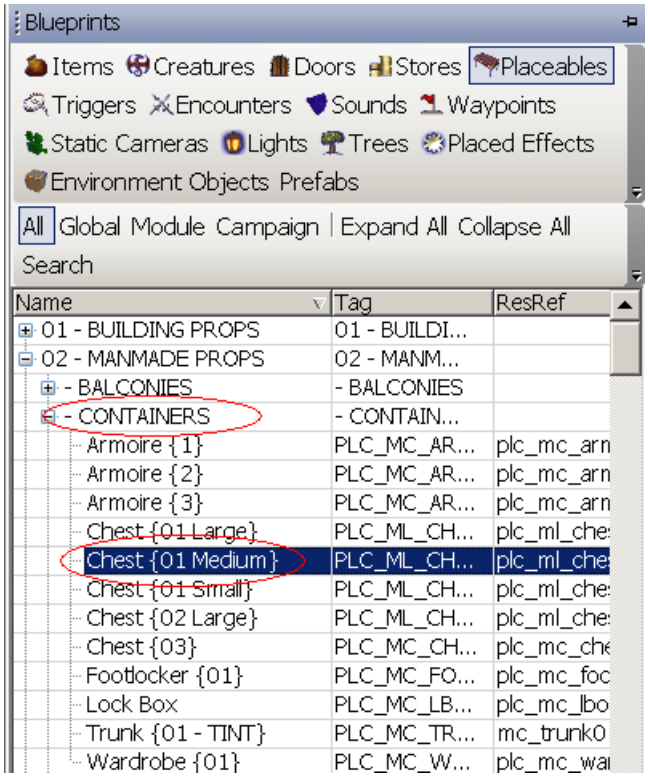
Let's place the treasure chest up against the far wall, opposite the doorway. Use the camera controls (and the SinPlugin camera controls, if you installed that in the last session) to zoom in to this part of the wall:

To place down a chest, click on the 'Blueprints' tab and select 'Placeables':



Select the 'Manmade Props' category by clicking the '+' sign next to it. Then click on the '+' next to the 'Containers' category.

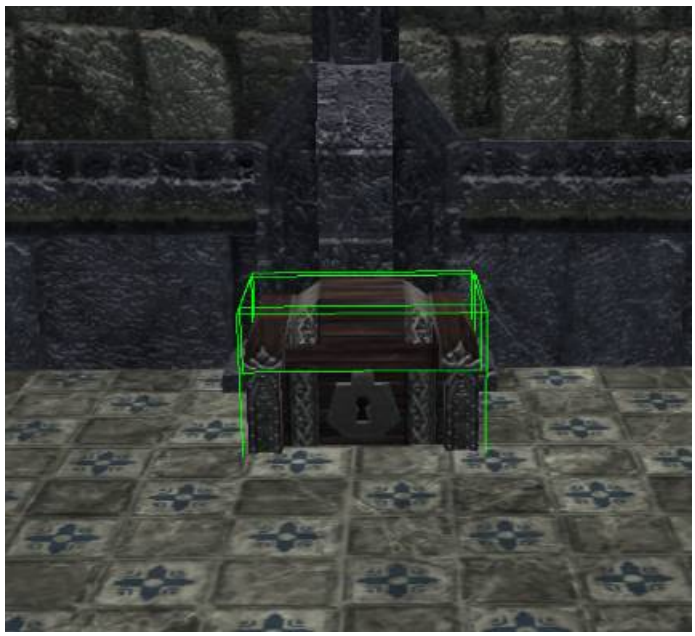
There you'll see a range of chests:


Blueprints
Items Creatures Doors Stores Placeables
Triggers Encounters Sounds Waypoints
Static Cameras Lights Trees Placed Effects
Environment Objects Prefabs
All Global Module Campaign Expand All Collapse All
Search
Name Tag ResRef
01 - BUILDING PROPS 01 - BUILDI...
02 - MANMADE PROPS 02 - MANM...
- BALCONIES - BALCONIES
- CONTAINERS - CONTAIN...
Armoire {1} PLC_MC_AR... plc_mc_arn
Armoire {2} PLC_MC_AR... plc_mc_arn
Armoire {3} PLC_MC_AR... plc_mc_arn
Chest {01 Large} PLC_ML_CH... plc_ml_che
Chest {01 Medium} PLC_ML_CH... plc_ml_che
Chest {01 Small} PLC_ML_CH... plc_ml_che
Chest {02 Large} PLC_ML_CH... plc_ml_che
Chest {03} PLC_MC_CH... plc_mc_che
Footlocker {01} PLC_MC_FO... plc_mc_foc
Lock Box PLC_MC_LB... plc_mc_lbo
Trunk {01 - TINT} PLC_MC_TR... mc_trunk0
Wardrobe {01} PLC_MC_W... plc_mc_wa

Let's choose 'Chest {01 Medium}' for now. Click on this, and then place it down next to the wall.

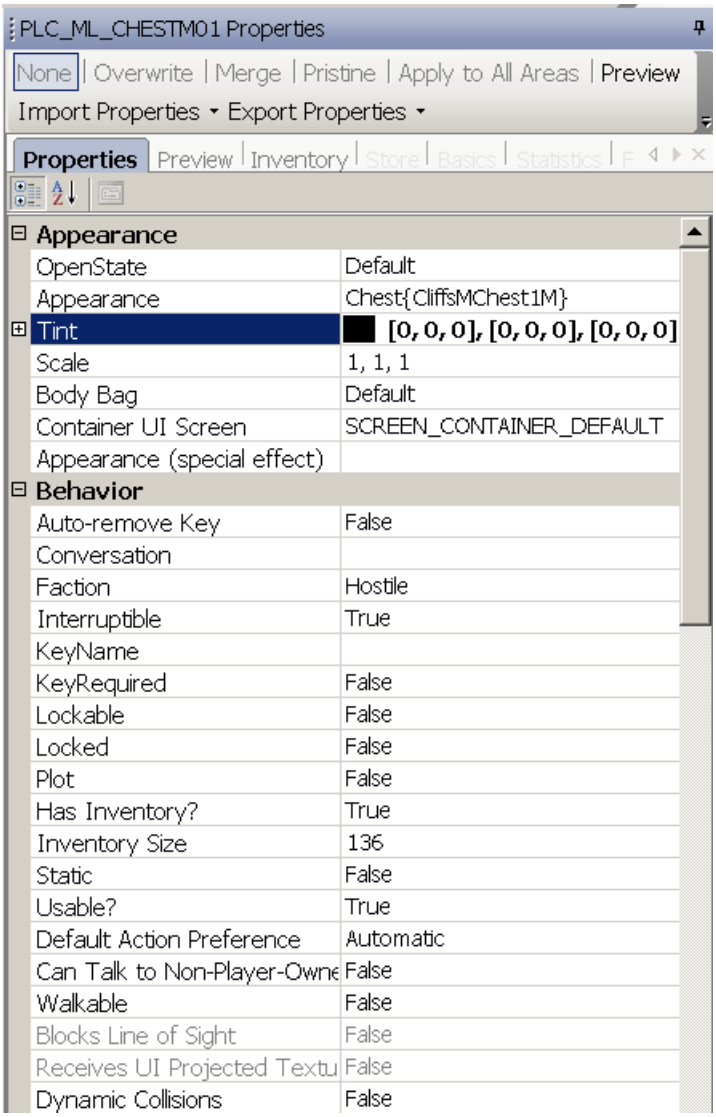
When you first place it down, it may be facing the wrong way, like this:

Just select the chest by clicking on 'Select Objects' in the toolbar and left clicking the chest. Then rotate it (using the 'Rotate 45 degrees' buttons ,or holding down CTRL and using the left and right arrow keys) and move it until it is sitting in front of the pillar facing outwards:



Now, while it is selected, let's check out its properties, which are crucial for interactive objects like chests.

Either click on the 'Properties' tab or right click the chest and select 'Properties (new window)'. The properties box will look like this:



Appearance

Under appearance, this time we can't tint the chest, but you can scale the chest as described earlier.

'Container UI Screen' should let you choose the screen that will appear when the chest's inventory is accessed by the player. However, from my testing, all the options are completely identical, so just ignore this option.

'Body Bag' should control the a graphic when the object dies (in this case, if the player destroys the chest by bashing it). However, again, no matter what you pick here, you just get the generic remains bag. So just ignore this one too...

I haven't played around with Appearance (special effect) – that's a bit more advanced.

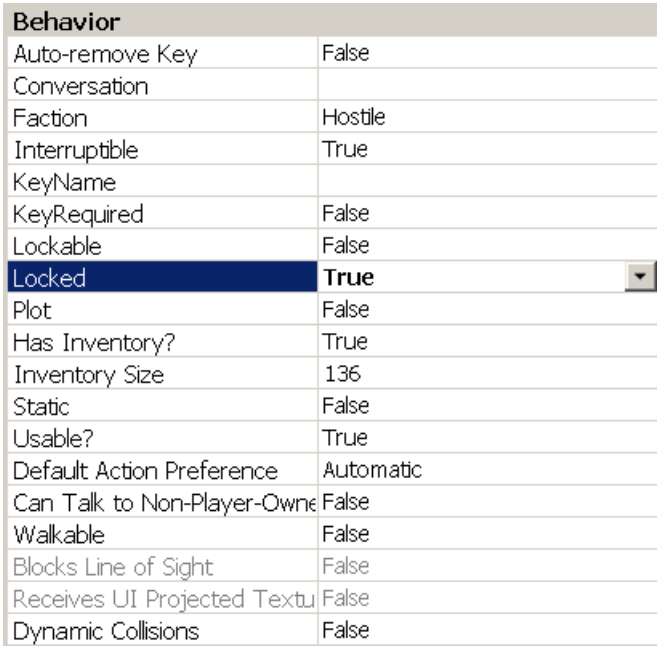
Behaviour

Now let's look under the behaviour tab. The interesting ones here that we haven't looked at before are the ones to do with keys and locks. Let's start with 'Lockable' and 'Locked'.

'Lockable' means that a player can re-lock the chest once they've opened it. So let's leave this at 'False' for now.

'Locked' means that the chest starts locked – the player will either have to pick the lock, find the key, or bash the chest open to get inside.

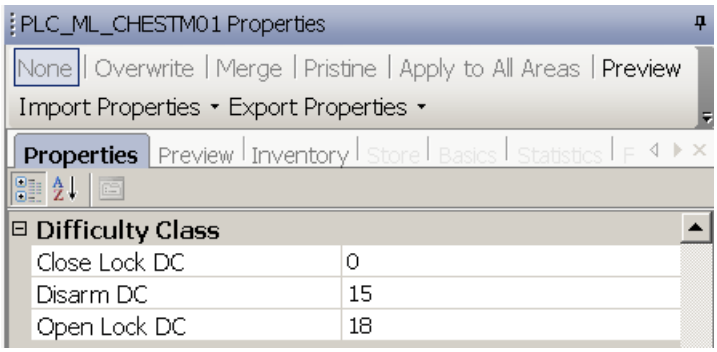
Since we're going to put treasure inside the chest, let's lock it. Select 'True' for 'Locked':



'Plot' will make the object invincible, which would stop players from being able to bash the chest open. We want them to be able to do that, so let's leave it as 'False'. Since we want players to be able to interact with the chest, we'll leave 'Static' as 'False' and 'Usable' as 'True'.

Difficult Class

Now let's scroll down a bit to 'Difficulty Class':


PLC_ML_CHESTM01 Properties
None | Overwrite | Merge | Pristine | Apply to All Areas | Preview
Import Properties Export Properties
Properties Preview Inventory Store Basics Statistics
Difficulty Class
Close Lock DC 0
Disarm DC 15
Open Lock DC 18

These numbers control how difficult it is to re-lock the chest, disarm any trap on the chest, and open the lock on the chest.

> **DCs (Difficulty Classes).** Think of the player rolling a 20-sided die and then adding their skill level and any bonuses to the roll – outside of combat, the computer usually just rolls you a 20 to simulate your best chance. If this number is equal to or higher to the DC, the player succeeds. Hence, as a very rough guide, anyone who puts a skill point in 'open locks' or 'disarm traps' can succeed at a lock or trap with a DC of 20 or less. About 22 is easy for any low level thief, anything higher would require more advanced thieving skills.

Since this a quiet rural church, we wouldn't expect it to have a sophisticated lock on it, so let's leave it as 18 – a very easy lock.

General

The general tab is useful for names, descriptions, and tags:

General	
Localized Name	Chest {01 Medium}
Localized Description	
Tag	PLC_ML_CHESTM01
Classification	{184439}|{184440}

'Localized Name' is the name of the chest that the player will see. Note, however, that they won't see anything that you put in the parentheses { and }. This is so you can put comments to yourself here that the player will never see.

'Localized Description' lets you put a description of the object that the player can read if they examine the object.

'Tag' is the unique tag you want to assign to this chest so that you can refer to it in scripts if you

need to. Go ahead and give the chest a name, hidden comment, description, and tag.

'Classification' is the category the blueprint appears under, expressed as numbers or the actual category. You can ignore it for “instances” (instances of objects in your module – as opposed to “blueprints” - which are objects in the 'Blueprints' list that you can subsequently place down).

We'll skip the 'Misc', 'Saving Throws', 'Scripts' and 'Shadows' sections, as you shouldn't have to pay attention to these, with the exception of adding scripts to any events you want to under the 'Scripts' section.

Statistics

The next category of interest is the 'Statistics' category:

Statistics	
Current Hit Points	15
Hardness	5
Hit Points	15
Trap	
Trap detectable?	True
Trap Detect DC	0
Trap disarmable?	True
Trapped	False
Trap one-shot?	True
TrapType	Spike Trap, Minor

Here you can set the hit points of the chest, and the current hit points if you want this to be different from the total hit points for any reason (say a chest that's already damaged from a previous fire or explosion).

The higher the hit points, the longer the player will have to stand there smashing it until it breaks. The higher the 'Hardness', the more hit points the chest will absorb without damage, so the harder it will be to deal damage to it. I'm going to make this chest a little easier and set my statistics as so:

Statistics	
Current Hit Points	10
Hardness	2
Hit Points	10

Trap

The next category, 'Trap', allows you to trap the chest. When a player opens it, they will get hit by the trap. To trap the chest, changed 'Trapped' to 'True'.

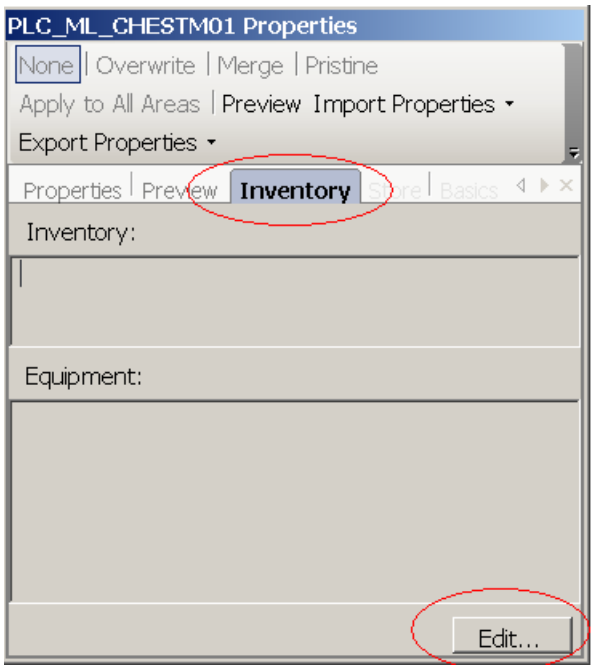
Leave 'Trap detectable' as 'True' so players have a chance to notice that the chest is trapped, though increase the DC from 0 so it's not immediately flagged as trapped! (For detecting a trap, players don't automatically roll a 20, so make this number lower than the open lock DC – say 13 for a fairly

easily detectable trap).

Leave 'Trap disarmable' to 'True' so a thief has a chance to be useful and disarm the trap, and leave 'Trap one-shot' as true so the trap goes off only once, not repeatedly every time the chest is opened.

Under 'TrapType' you can select the trap. The type of trap affects how much damage is done, what type of damage is done (magical, fire, piercing etc.) and any other effects (such as poisoning the player). Stick to 'minor' traps if you expect the player to be a low level, and move up to more dangerous traps later in the adventure. The default 'Spike Trap, Minor' will do fine for this chest.

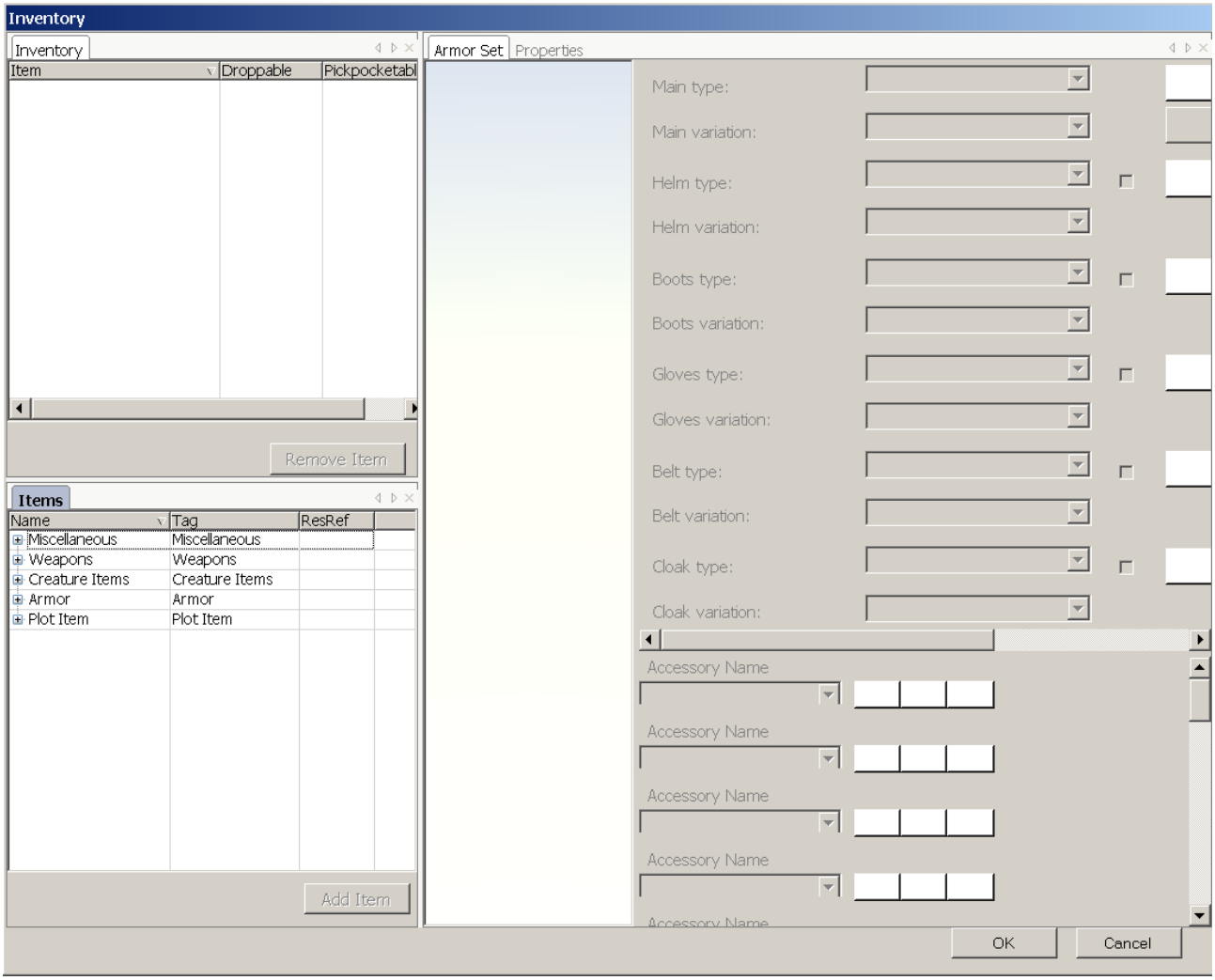
We need to put some treasure inside the chest to reward the player for getting into it. Click on the 'Inventory' tab near the top of the 'Properties' box:



You'll see currently the inventory box is empty. To fix that, click on the 'Edit...' button.

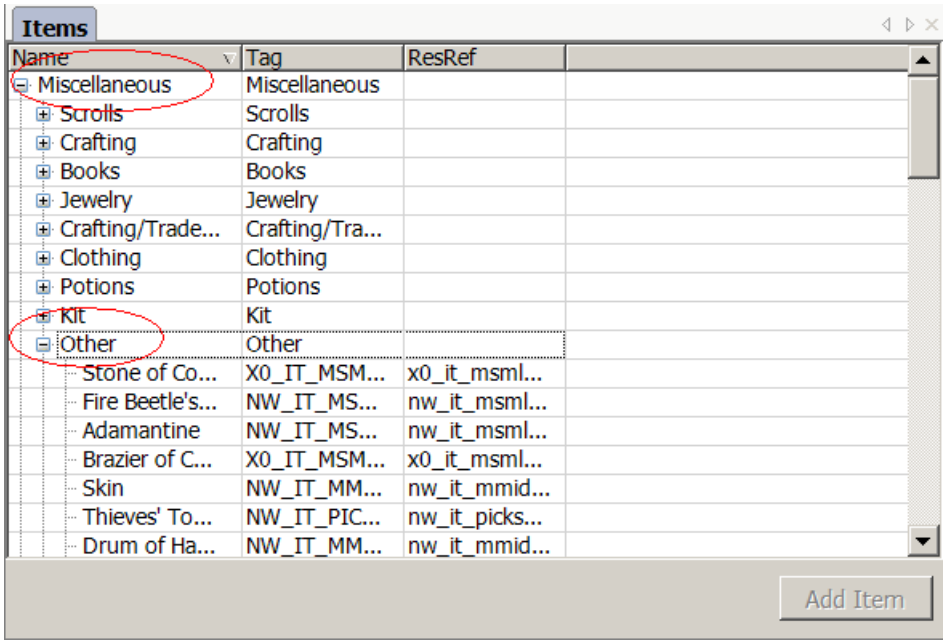
The inventory screen is big and daunting, and you may have to spend time resizing the different areas of the screen to get it to be all readable.

Here's my screen after some resizing:

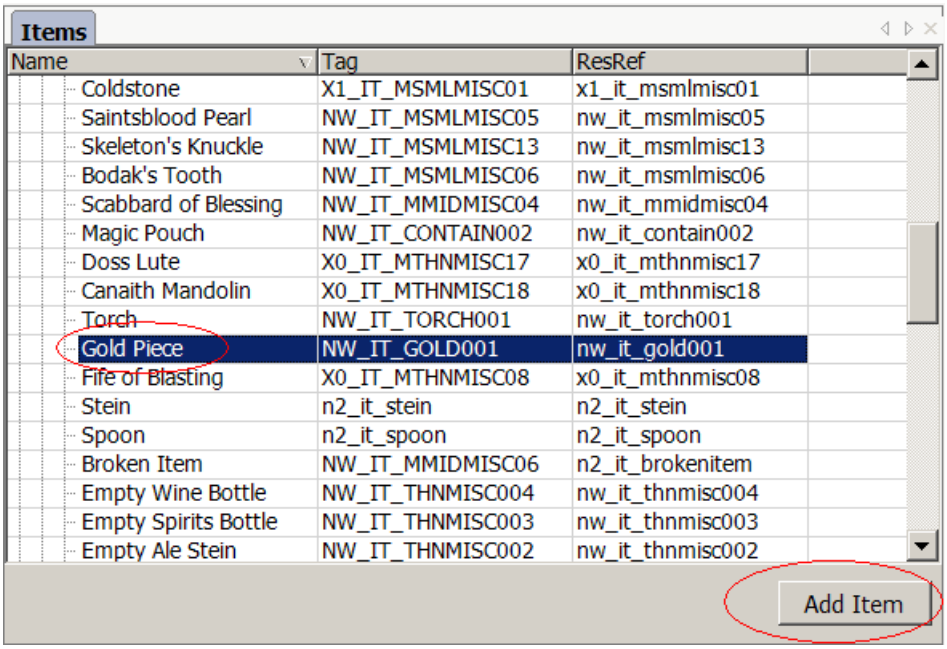


The good news is for now we can completely ignore the right side of the screen – the 'Armor Set' / 'Properties' part, and just look at the 'Inventory' square in the top left, and the 'Items' list in the bottom left.

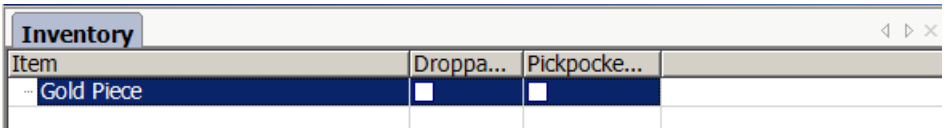
From this Items list, I want to select 'gold piece' to put some gold in the chest. Click on the '+' sign next to 'Miscellaneous', and then the '+' sign next to 'Other':



Now scroll down and find 'Gold Piece' from the list and select it. Highlight it and click on the 'Add Item' button:



You will see it appear in the 'Inventory' box in the top left of your screen:



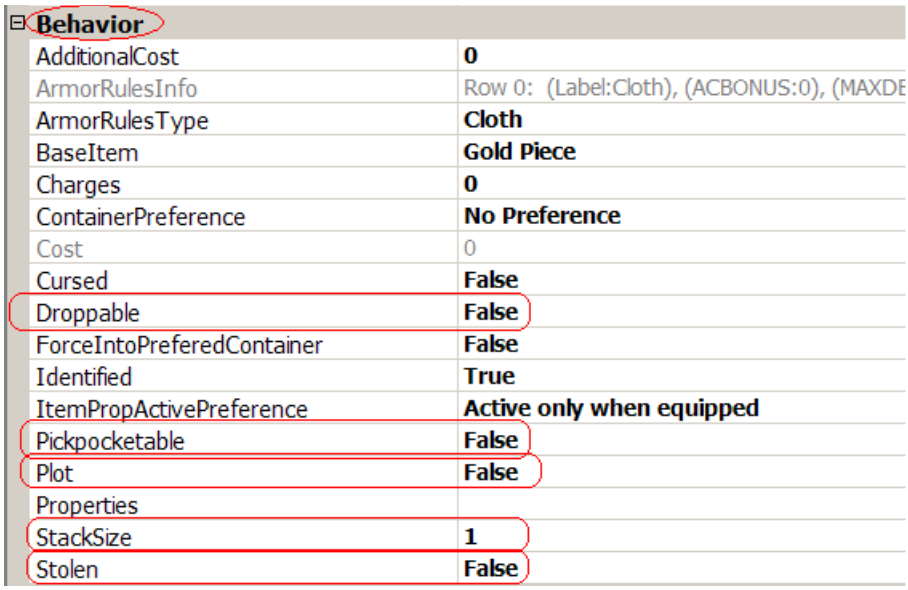
Excellent! You can see that the gold piece has been added to the chest. You'll also see that there are two properties associated with this object – 'Droppable' and 'Pickpocketable'.

'Droppable' means that it will drop when the object is destroyed (or in the case of a creature, when the creature dies). So in this case, we want to tick it so that if a player destroys the chest, they can pick up the gold.

'Pickpocketable' means that a thief player can make an attempt to pickpocket the item. This should only be ticked for creature inventories. You can't pickpocket a chest! We'll get to this in a bit, but for now, leave the tick box empty.

But wait ... there are more properties. Look back over to the right of the screen and you'll see the 'Properties' tab next to 'Armor Set':

Click this while you have the 'Gold Piece' selected in the inventory screen (as in the above picture), and you'll see a properties window for the gold piece. For now at least, only one section of the properties window is useful to us: Behaviour. Scroll down and find this section:



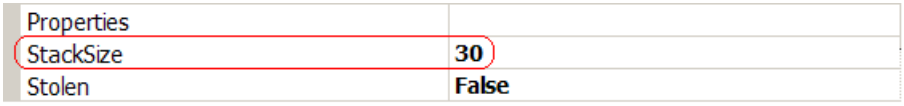
I've highlighted five properties that I think are most important. The first two, 'Droppable' and 'Pickpocketable' are exactly the same as in the inventory window earlier – just another way of setting them.

'Plot' again refers to something that is really important in the game, and you don't want it to be able to be destroyed or lost, ever. For normal items like gold, leave this as 'False' (Things you may want to consider setting as plot later on are integral items like important keys, the head of the bandit the players need to return to the mayor, journals that open up further quests etc.).

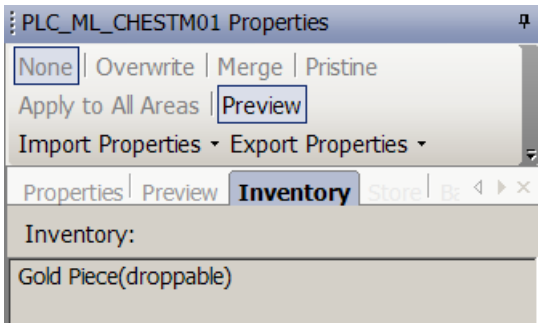
'StackSize' allows you to specify how many of the item you want to put in the chest.

> **Note.** This only works with some items, like gold, potions and scrolls, that are stackable, in the sense that the player can hold more than one of the item in only one inventory space. By contrast, armour is not stackable – you can't specify that there are 3 sets of the same armour in the chest (unless you add each one individually), and players can't hold 3 sets of armour in their backpack as if they were only one set.

One gold piece is a very measly reward – let's set it to something higher. I've changed the number to 30 gold pieces:



Now click 'OK' to get out of the inventory screen and take a look at the 'Inventory' tab in the properties box again:

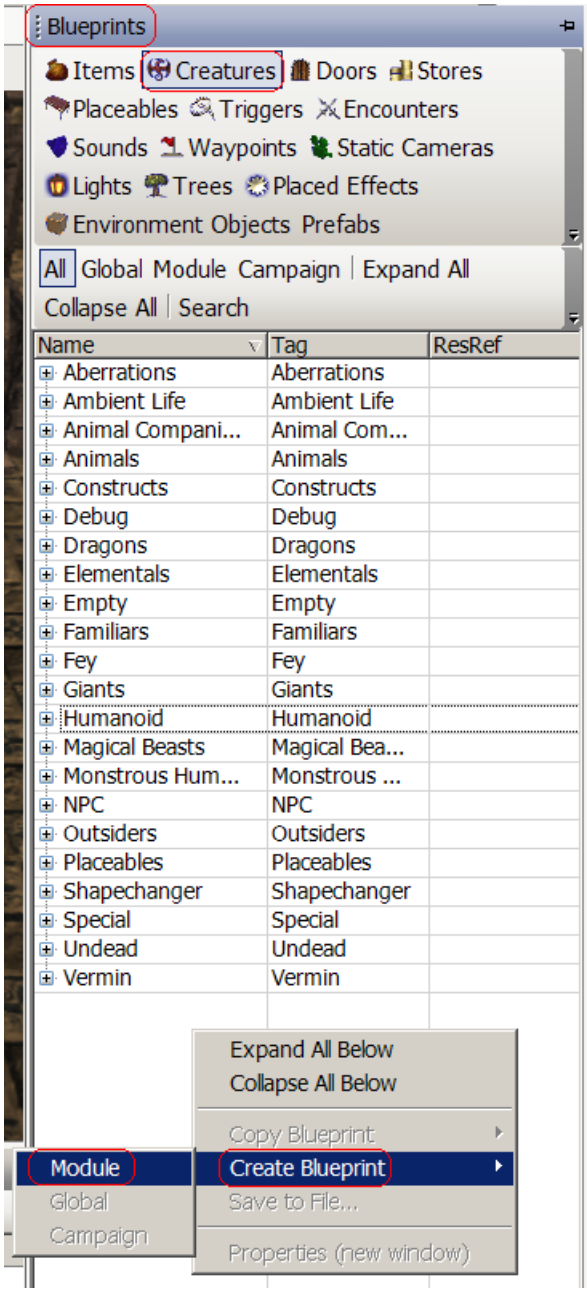


Success! We can see that the gold is now in the chest's inventory, and is set to droppable.

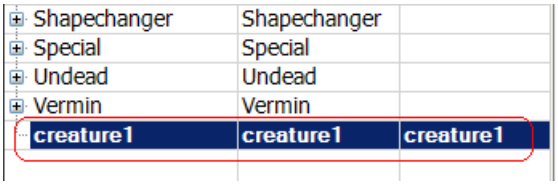
4.2 Placing down characters

The game will be very boring without other characters for the player to meet and talk with. These characters, that the player may or may not end up fighting, are called NPCs (Non-Player Characters). As an example of an NPC, let's place a priest in this church.

Click on the 'Blueprints' tab, and then select Creatures. Right click anywhere on the white area and you should get a menu pop up with the option Create Blueprint > Module. Select this option:



This will bring up a default creature blueprint called creature 1, placed at the end of the list of blueprints:



Select the blueprint and open the properties tab. Now is another 'Don't Panic' moment ... the 'Properties' window is very busy, and as you can see, the different tabs seem to stretch on forever:

The first time I saw all of this, I baulked and started to feel a headache coming on. But here are a few points to keep in mind:

1) **Almost everything in the 'Properties' tab is repeated in the subsequent 'Basics' / 'Statistics' etc. tabs**. They're just two different ways of entering in the same information about a character. In this section, I'll take you through the Properties tab first, because it's handy to be able to enter the information all at once, but I'll also show you the other tabs, because they look nicer and may be a bit more user friendly.

2) **How much time and effort you put into each character is up to you.** Obviously, the more time you put into a character, the more interesting it is to the player, but balance this with the amount of effort that takes. You could skimp a bit on background, non-important characters, while customising the main plot characters more heavily. You can also skimp on quite a few areas if you have no intention of the character ever fighting with the player.

Before we start customising, though, I want to show you a very nice trick I learned from the NWN2 forums. Click on the second tab, 'Preview', and you'll see a preview of what your character currently looks like:

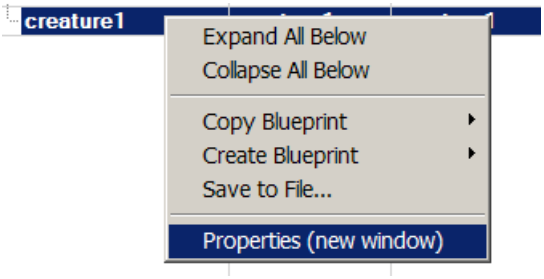
This is great, but at the moment you can't see it all of the time. To fix that, click on the pin icon:

... to make it a window rather than a docked tab (if it isn't already a window), and then left click and drag the title bar of the window so it becomes a stand alone, floating window:

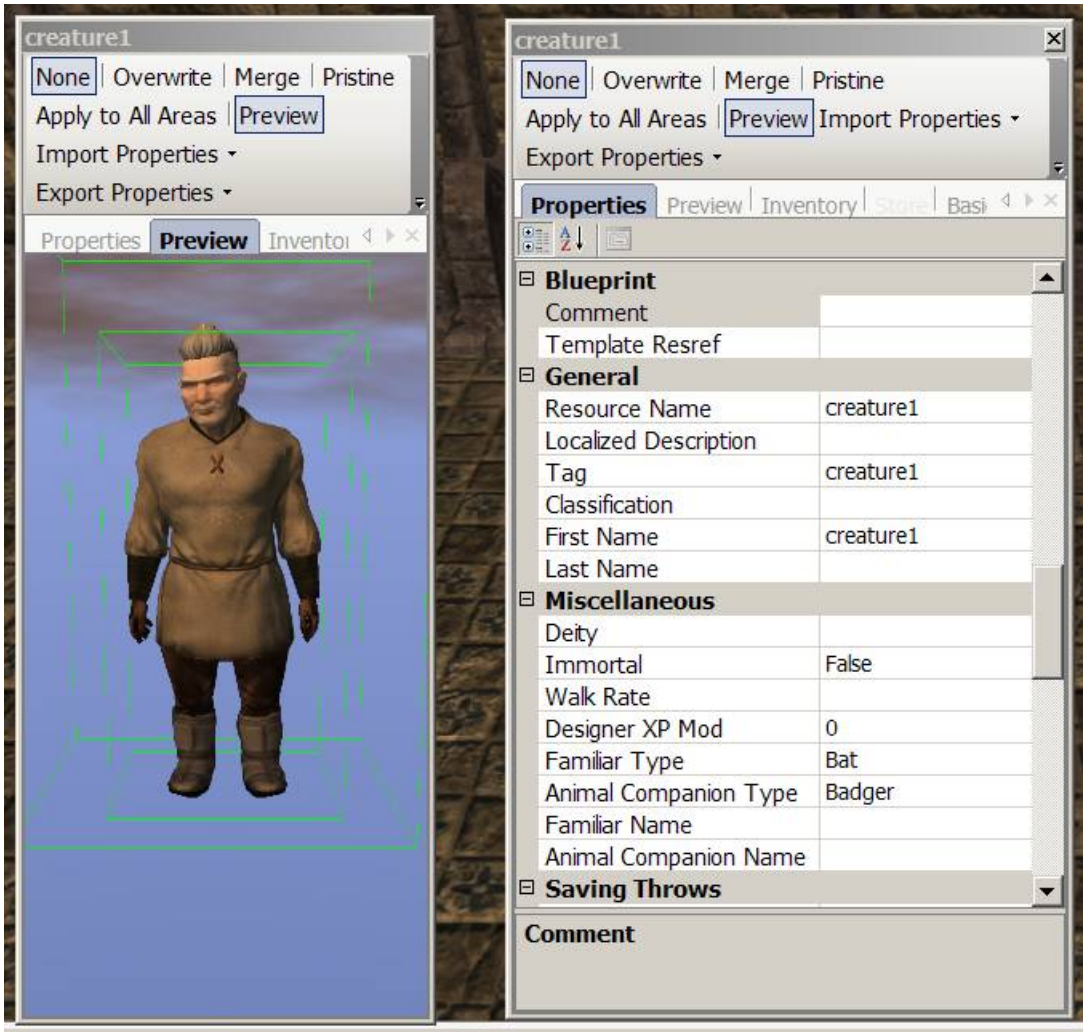
You can make any of your windows floating stand-alone windows using this method. You would have noticed a bunch of arrows appearing when you dragged the window. If you want to dock the window back to a side of the screen, just move it onto the arrow pointing to that side of the screen.

So for example, to dock this window to the left side of the screen, drag it onto this button:

Now, if you right-click on the creature1 entry in the blueprints tab, and select 'Properties (new window)':



This will bring up a second Properties window up:



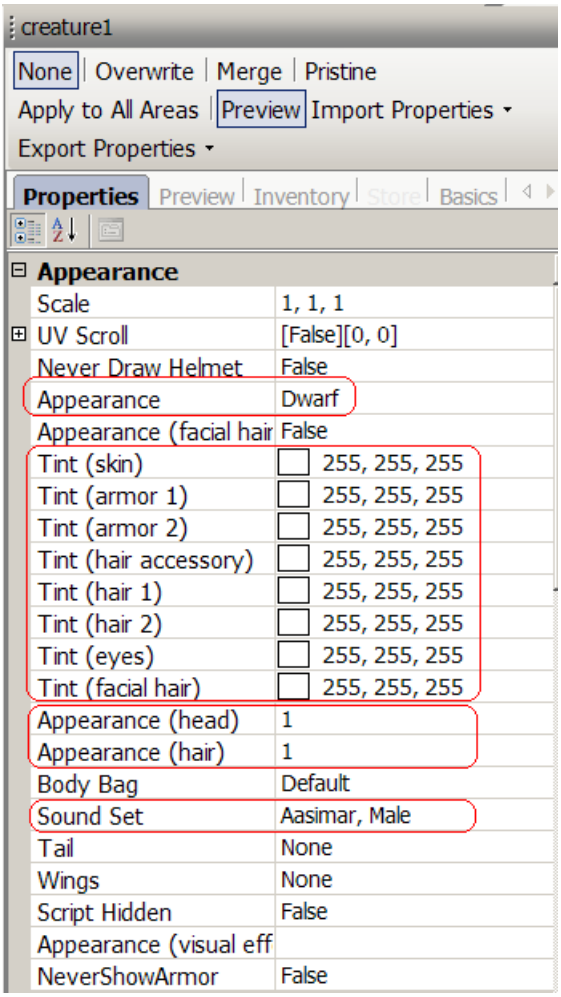
Any changes you make to the character will be reflected in the preview on the left! Very handy.

Now let's dive into the 'Properties' tab, taking the different sections one at a time.

Appearance

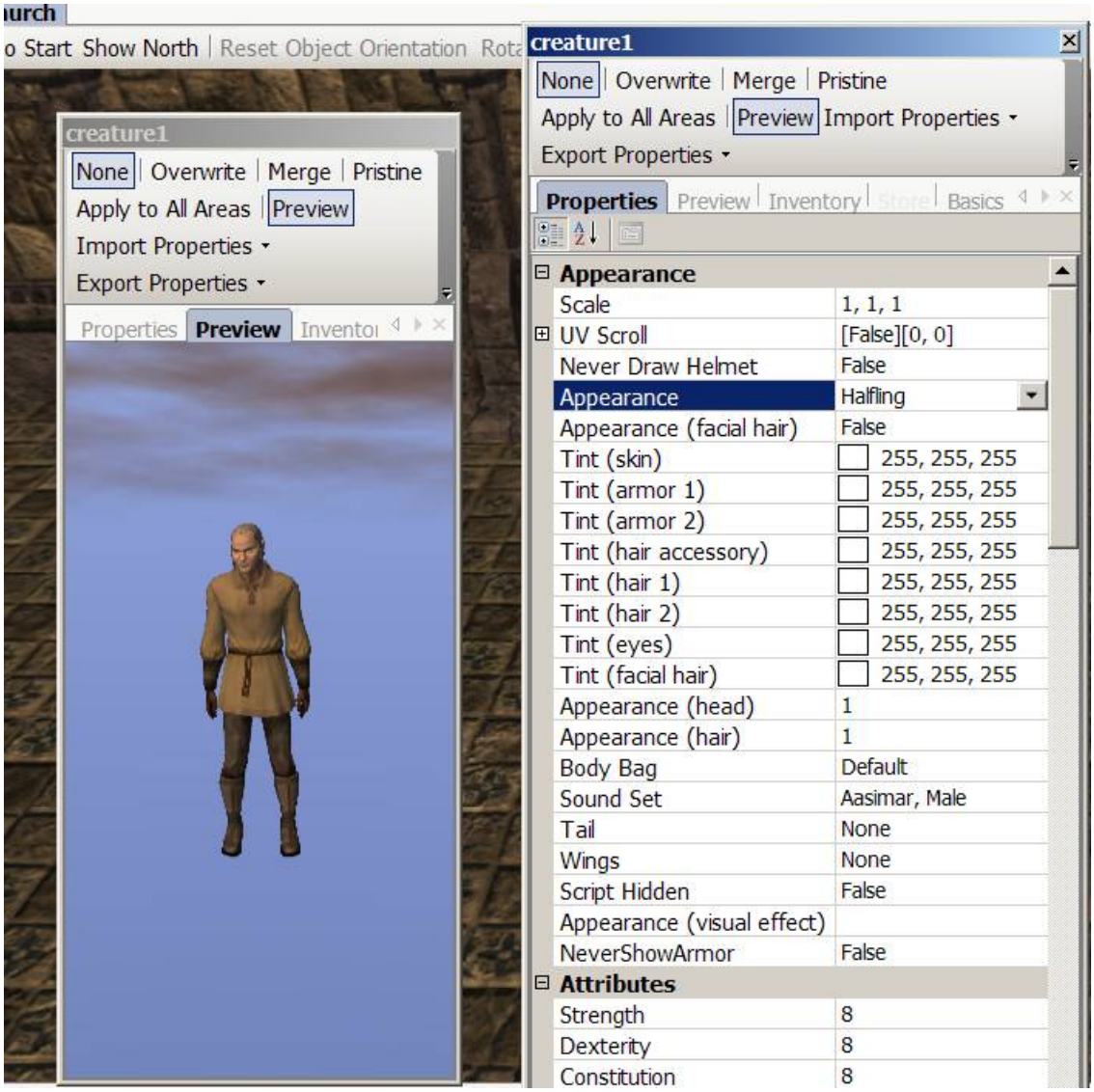
This is one of the more fun parts of creating a character, where you can control what the character looks like.

I've highlighted what I think are the most important options in this section below:



The first one – 'Appearance' – is so critical I strongly urge you to do this **first**. *This controls the base type of creature you're dealing with.*

The default is dwarf, but let's change this to 'Halfling' to create a halfling priest for this church:

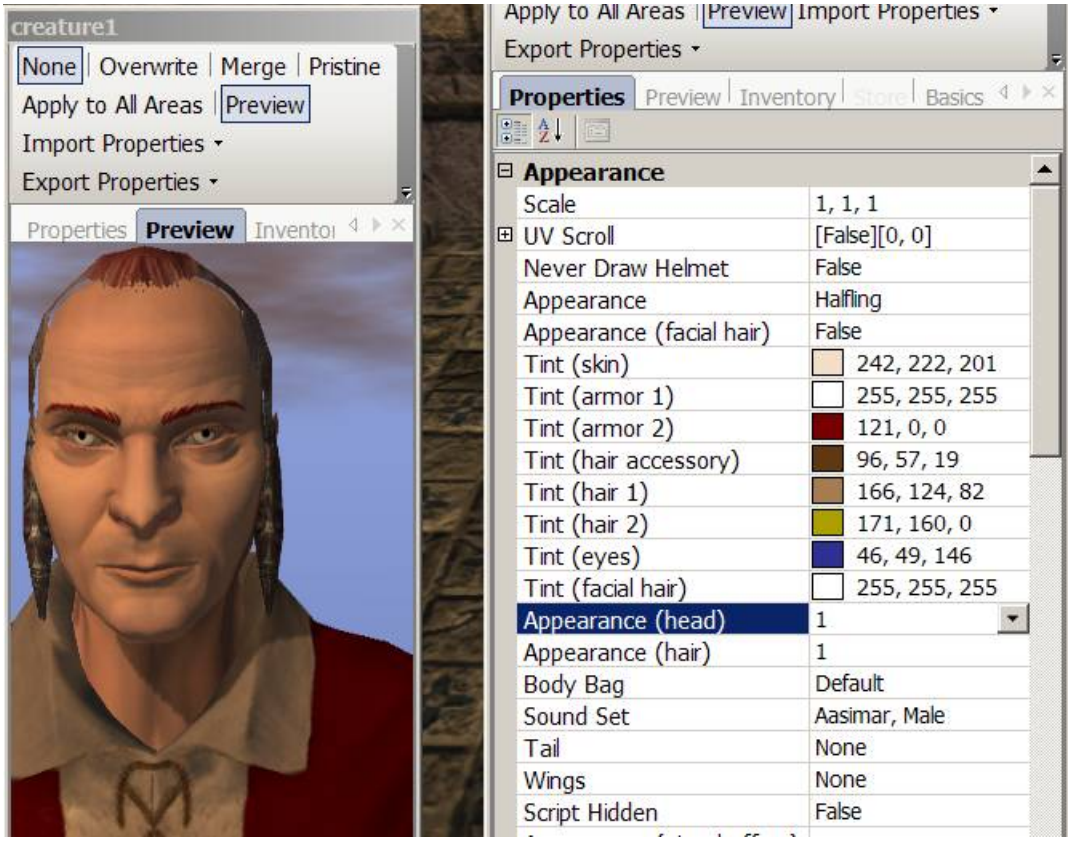

urch
o Start Show North | Reset Object Orientation Rota
creature1
None | Overwrite | Merge | Pristine
Apply to All Areas | Preview
Import Properties
Export Properties
Properties | Preview | Inventor
creature1
None | Overwrite | Merge | Pristine
Apply to All Areas | Preview | Import Properties
Export Properties
Properties | Preview | Inventory | Store | Basics
Appearance
Scale 1, 1, 1
UV Scroll [False][0, 0]
Never Draw Helmet False
Appearance Halfling
Appearance (facial hair) False
Tint (skin) 255, 255, 255
Tint (armor 1) 255, 255, 255
Tint (armor 2) 255, 255, 255
Tint (hair accessory) 255, 255, 255
Tint (hair 1) 255, 255, 255
Tint (hair 2) 255, 255, 255
Tint (eyes) 255, 255, 255
Tint (facial hair) 255, 255, 255
Appearance (head) 1
Appearance (hair) 1
Body Bag Default
Sound Set Aasimar, Male
Tail None
Wings None
Script Hidden False
Appearance (visual effect)
NeverShowArmor False
Attributes
Strength 8
Dexterity 8
Constitution 8

You can see the Preview has changed to a (rather scary looking) halfling character.

'Appearance (facial hair)' let's you choose whether or not to give the character a beard.

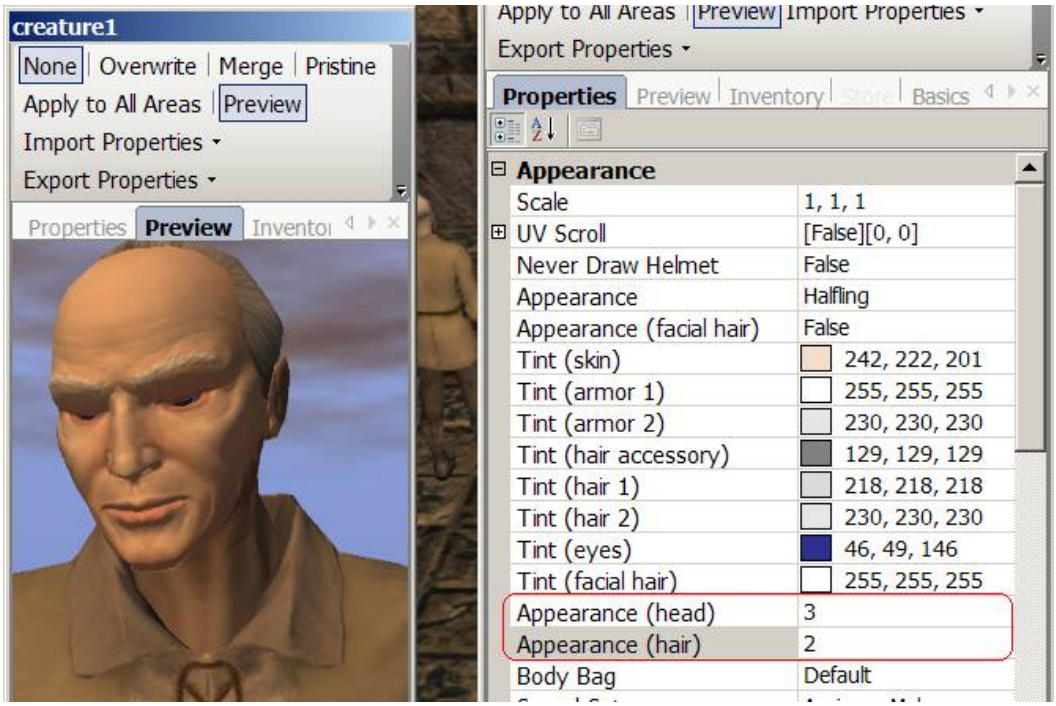
The next section I've highlighted is the Tinting section – where you can set the colour for different parts of the character – their hair, their eyes and their clothes.

I've had a play around with my halfling, and this is what I've come up with:



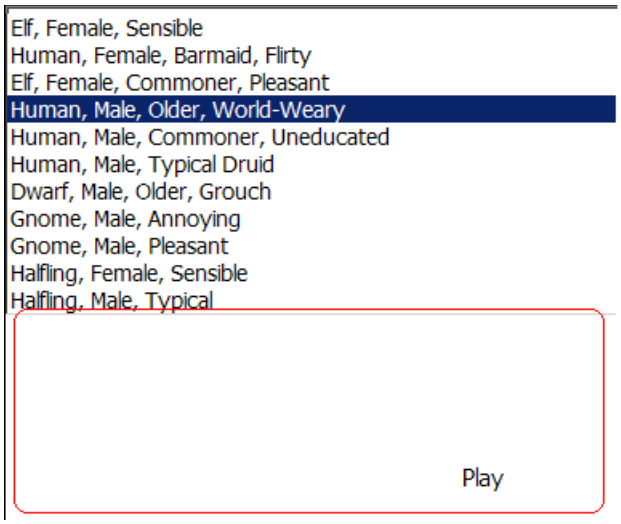
Still not very priest like, but starting to look more interesting. You can see the colours I've selected on the right (use the drop down arrows on the right to choose the colours), and the results of this on the left. Have a play around until you like the look of your character.

'Appearance (head)' and 'Appearance (hair)' let you customise the face and hair of your character. The drop down arrows give you a list of numbers – you'll have to try each number in turn to see what face you like best. Here's what I chose (Head 3 and Hair 2):



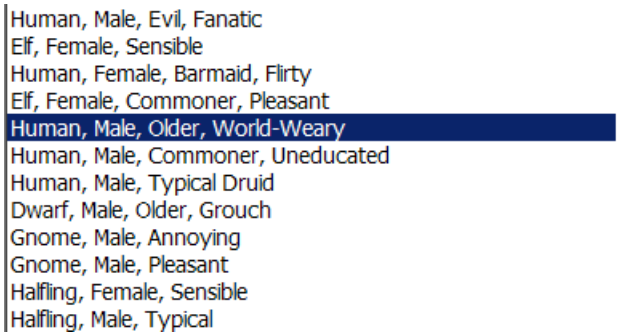
Now we have an aged halfling priest.

The final property I've highlighted in this section is 'Sound Set'. Here you need to choose the sound set that sounds like it will suit your character the best. You can preview the sound by clicking on the 'Play' button:



Disappointingly, almost all of them are rehashed from NWN1. Oh well, at least that means I'm familiar with them. Also note that currently many of the voice sounds appear to be missing (at least for me and other people), and you won't hear anything when you click on 'Play' for many of the human voices.

I've chosen 'Human, Male, Older, World-Weary', even though we're dealing with a halfling, because I think this will sound best:



Attributes

The next section is attributes, which will warm the heart of any old school pen and paper Dungeons and Dragons fan:

Attributes	
Strength	8
Dexterity	8
Constitution	8
Intelligence	8
Wisdom	8
Charisma	8

The different attributes of the character should be familiar if you've played any Dungeons and Dragons, real or computer based (including NWN1). Otherwise, time to bone up on the Dungeons and Dragons rules! You can find these in the game manual.

The scores should generally range from 3-18, with 3 being truly awful and 18 being godlike. These attributes will mainly affect combat (including spellcasting and melee combat). So if you don't anticipate the player ever fighting the character, you could ignore these (for example, waiters/waitresses, merchants etc.).

Behaviour

The next section is 'Behaviour' – another extremely important section. Again, I've highlighted the properties that I think are most important below:

Behavior	
Conversation	
Decay Time	0
Disarmable	False
Can Talk to Non-Player Owned	False
Equipped Items	Head: , Chest: Cleric's Robe(droppable) , Boots: , Arms: ,
Faction ID	Commoner
Conversation Interruptible	False
Lootable Corpse	False
No Permanent Death?	False
Perception Range	Default
Always Perceivable	False
Plot	False
Starting Package	Default Cleric
Templates	
Disable AI While Hidden	True
Bump State	Default

'Converstion' allows you to select a conversation file for the character. You will have to write the conversation first, of course. And I haven't covered that. But when you do write conversations, attach them here.

'Decay Time' is how long (in seconds, I believe) it will take the characters' body to disappear once it's been killed (or, if Lootable Corpse is set to True, once the body has been looted). Short decay times mean that dead bodies won't hang around for long.

'Faction ID' controls generally speaking how the character will react to the player (and to be more advanced, also other non-player characters). There are four main factions:

Commoner: Your friendly townsfolk and so forth who will talk to the player or generally mill about.

Hostile: Everything else not so friendly. Will attack players on sight.

Defender: Guards who will come to the defence of players or Commoners who are attacked by Hostile creatures.

Merchants: Slightly different configuration for merchants. Use for merchants.

So for now, we want a friendly priest: Leave it as 'Commoner'.

'Lootable Corpse' means that the character won't just drop items when they die, but instead the player will have to loot their items from their dead body. I personally think this is a far superior way of going about killing and looting, so if you think the character might die at any point, set this to 'True'.

'No Permanent Death' can be a bit confusing at first. ***It does not mean that the character cannot die!*** Rather, it means that their body will never disappear. When the character dies, their body will stick around forever. Again, I personally think this is a much better way of handling dead characters than having bodies mysteriously vanish and being replaced by little brown bags – at least for all but the highest body count hack and slash adventures.

'Plot' again will set the character to be immortal so the player can't destroy the storyline of the whole module by killing the character. Use sparingly and only for important characters.

<u>Blueprint</u>

The blueprint section is very short, consisting of a little comment you can write (purely for your own use – the player will never see this), and the name of the 'Resref' – the string the program will use to create an instance of this character.

You don't have to rename the Resref at all if you don't want to, but if you're going to write scripts that call on the Resref, it may make it easier to have a naming convention that makes sense. As you

can see, I've called mine 'cust_halflingpriest':

Blueprint	
Comment	Halfling Priest
Template Resref	cust_halflingpriest

General

The general tab also has a couple of very useful options:

General	
Resource Name	halfling priest
Localized Description	A devout, halfling priest with a gentle disposition.
Tag	HalflingPriest
Classification	
First Name	Father Amyrin
Last Name	

The first is the 'Resource Name', which is what will appear in the 'Blueprints' tab.

The 'Localized Description' is for the description of the character that will pop up when the player examines them.

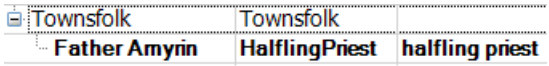
The 'Tag' is different from the 'Resref'. While the 'Resref' is what the program calls on to create a *new* instance of the character, the 'Tag' is what the program uses to refer to *that particular instance*. This is why tags should be unique – otherwise the program can get confused as to which instance you're trying to refer to. I've set the tag to 'HalflingPriest'.

'Classification' allows you to place it in a category in the 'Blueprints' box (huge thanks go out to johnbgardener for finding this out, and to ghipwell for further, brilliant discoveries).

The pre-existing blueprints have numbers that correspond to the categories, such as {184335} for NPC. You can copy these numbers for your blueprints, or, much more easily, you can just type the name of the category. For example, type **NPC** to put it in the NPC category. For subcategories, use the | key (Shift + \). So Animals, Dire would be **Animals|Dire**. You can even create new categories by just typing something new into the classification field.

Let's put this priest under a new category called 'Townsfolk'. Type 'Townsfolk' into the 'Classification' box (make sure you're dealing with the blueprint, not an instance of the priest in your module, otherwise it won't work).

You'll see that the blueprint has now moved under a 'Townsfolk' heading in the 'Blueprints' box:

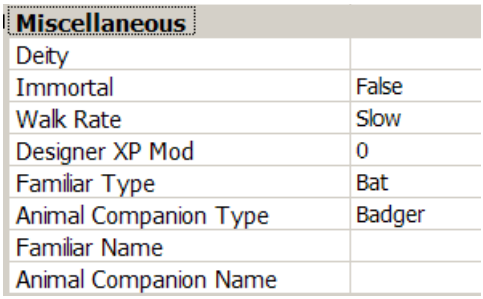


Townsfolk	Townsfolk	
Father Amyrin	**HalflingPriest**	**halfling priest**

'First Name' and 'Last Name' is for setting the name of the character (surprise!). You can see I've entered 'Father Amyrin' as the first name, and haven't bothered about a last name.

Miscellaneous

If the category of 'General' wasn't miscellaneous enough ... there's another category called 'Miscellaneous':



Miscellaneous	
Deity	
Immortal	False
Walk Rate	Slow
Designer XP Mod	0
Familiar Type	Bat
Animal Companion Type	Badger
Familiar Name	
Animal Companion Name	

You can set the Deity for the character under 'Deity' – though we'll need more information on the deity system before we can make best use of this.

'Immortal' sets the character to not be able to die.

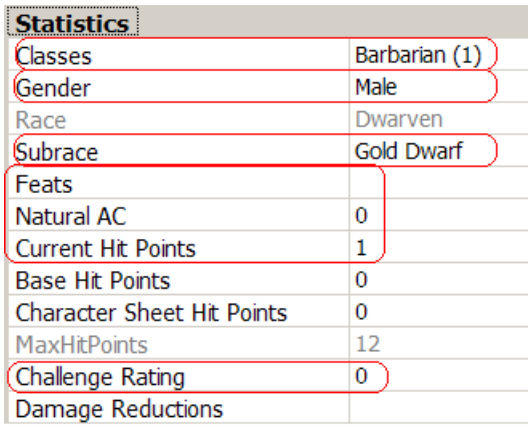
'Walk Rate' controls the speed at which the character walks. I've set it to 'Slow' for the priest to emulate an old, shuffling halfing.

I don't yet know what 'Designer XP Mod' is for ...

And lastly, the 'Familiar' and 'Animal Companion' names and types are for giving wizard or ranger characters their pets. It won't have any affect for any other classes.

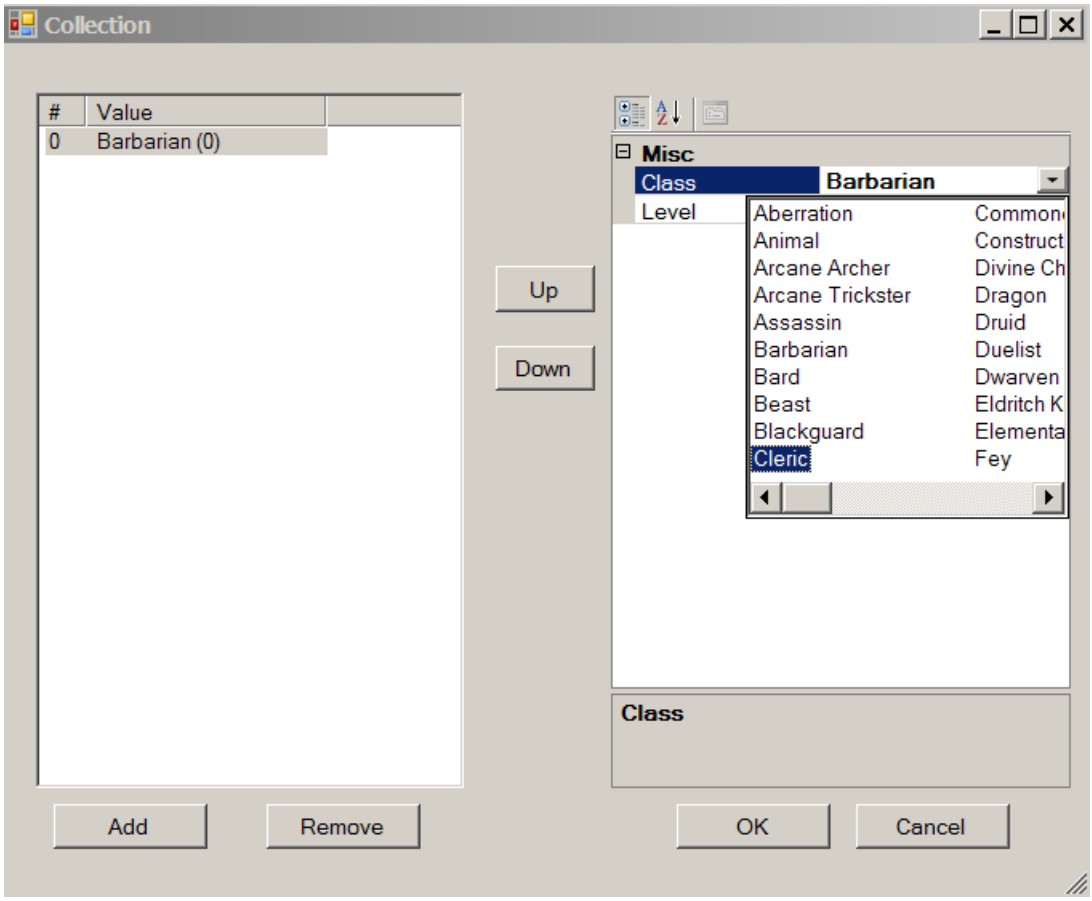
Statistics

And nearing the end, we have the 'Statistics' box. There are several very important options to set here:



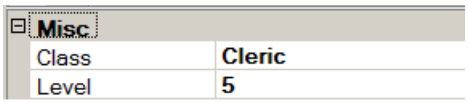
Statistics	
Classes	Barbarian (1)
Gender	Male
Race	Dwarven
Subrace	Gold Dwarf
Feats	
Natural AC	0
Current Hit Points	1
Base Hit Points	0
Character Sheet Hit Points	0
MaxHitPoints	12
Challenge Rating	0
Damage Reductions	

Firstly, 'Classes' will bring up a screen that will let you set the class of the character (or even give the character multiple classes):



The pane on the left shows the current class(es) of the character. On the right, you can change this default class, and then choose the level of the class. Just use the 'Add' button (and the 'Up' and 'Down' buttons if you need to) to create a multi-class character.

I'm going to choose 'Cleric' for our priest, and level 5:



'Gender' for humanoid characters is usually just a matter of choosing male or female.

However, if you look at the list of options you'll see 'Both', 'None' and 'Other' as well. These are options purely for scripting – where a creature may react differently depending on these factors. I haven't had to use them – you can ignore them most of the time.

You can't set 'Race' directly, but rather you have to choose a 'Subrace', and that will set the main

race. Since we want a halfling, let's choose one of the halfling subraces. I'm going to choose the 'Strongheart Halfling' subrace. You can see the 'Race' automatically changes to 'Halfling'.

'Feats' is much, much better handled on the 'Feats' tab, so I'll leave it for then.

'Natural AC' is the Armour Class of the character when they're not wearing any armour. The higher this is, the harder it will be to hit the character successfully. For normal characters, this should be left at 0.

There are three different values for 'Hit Points'. The one that matters most is the 'Current Hit Points' – this will control how much the character can take before they die. Here's what I set for my priest:

Current Hit Points	35
Base Hit Points	0
Character Sheet Hit Points	0
MaxHitPoints	35

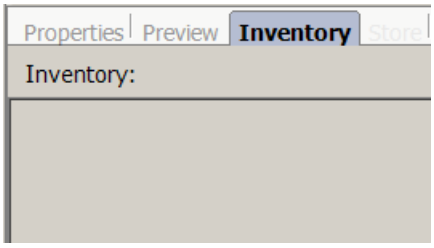
'Challenge Rating' is the indication of how difficult the character will be to defeat. Unless you know what you're doing, you can leave the toolset to work that out for you.

And that's the mammoth 'Properties' tab done!

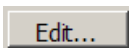
Inventory

The next tab along is 'Inventory', where you can equip your character.

Initially, your character won't have any items in their inventory:

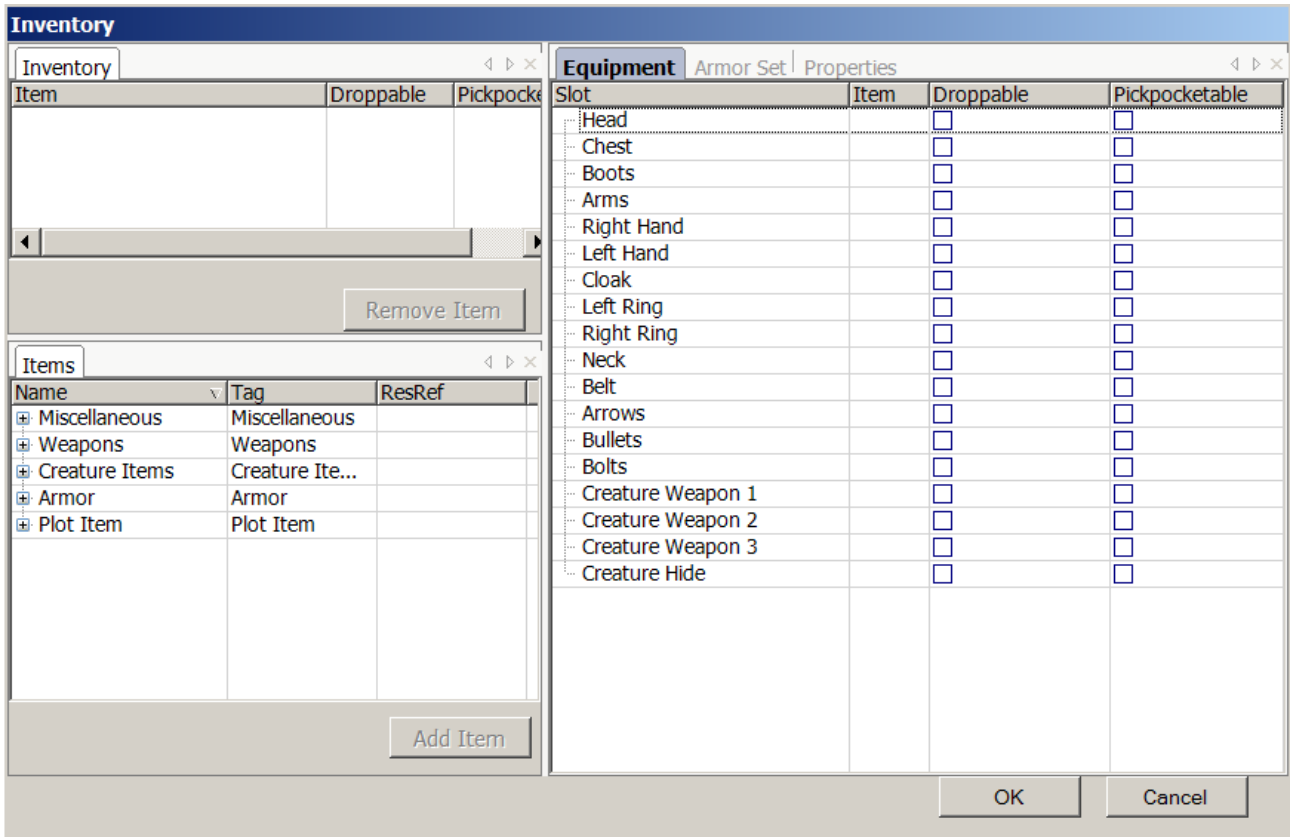


To change this, click on the 'Edit' button:



This will bring up the inventory interface. You may have to fiddle around with the resizing to get it easy to use.

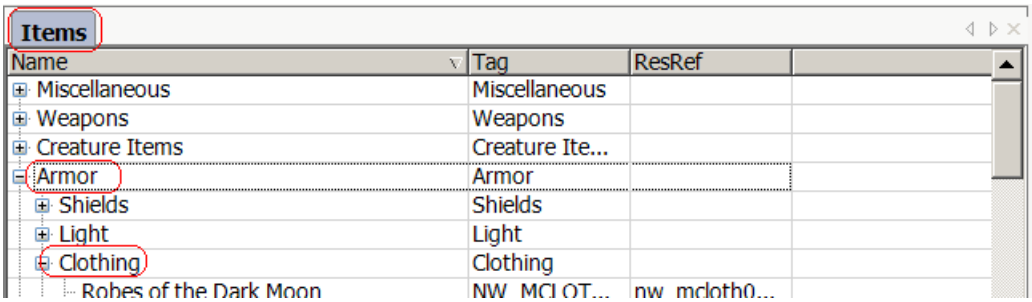
Here's mine:



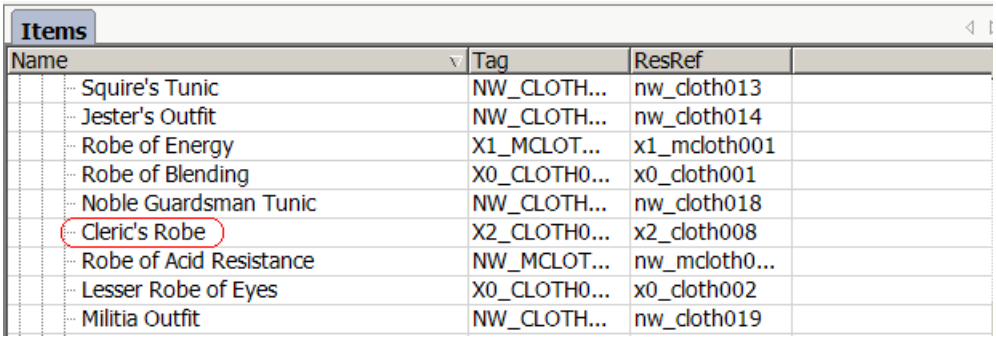
This should be familiar from when we made the treasure chest. But now look at the box on the right – here we can equip the character's different equipment slots.

Since we're making a friendly priest, we're only going to give him some clothes (in the 'Chest' slot). But you can see the slots for helmets ('Head'), rings ('Left Ring' and 'Right Ring') and other types of equipment there if you want to add these as well.

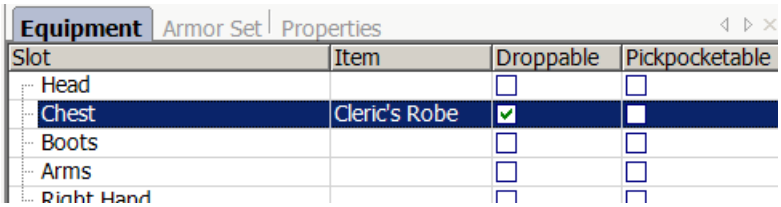
To start adding the clothes, click on 'Armor' under 'Items', and then on 'Clothing':



Now scroll down and find 'Cleric's Robe':



Drag this item up into the 'Chest' slot:



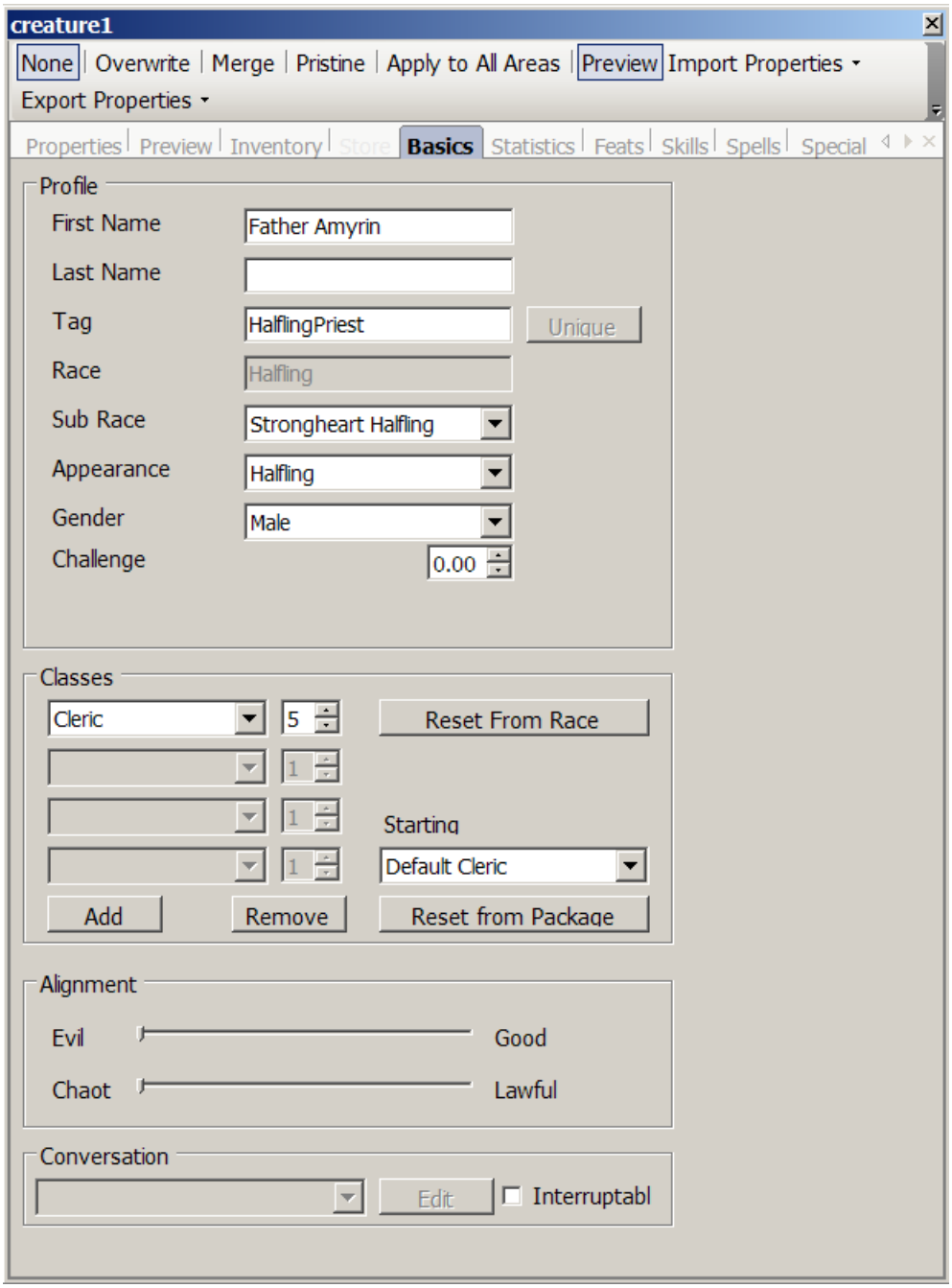
You can see I've set the robe to 'Droppable', so if the player killed the priest, they could take this robe.

Great! That's all the equipment we'll give him for now. Click 'OK' and then look at the preview window:

Now he's really looking like a priest!

Basics

The next tab along (Ignoring Store ... that is a whole tutorial on its own) is 'Basics':



You can see that most of it is a repeat of what we've already done in the Properties tab, but this can be a nicer way of entering it.

However, there are two new import properties here: the box called 'Starting' and the 'Alignment' box.

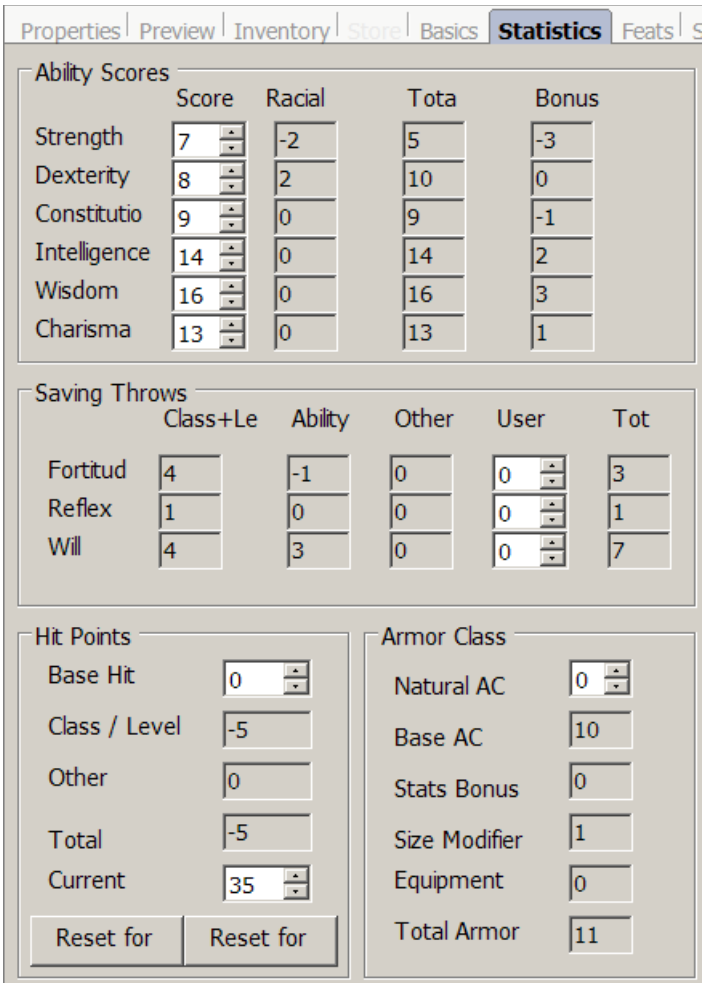
'Starting' controls how the character levels up. Only henchmen (members of the player's party) will level up, so you only have to look at this when you're creating henchmen (again, a whole tutorial, or

even several tutorials, in itself). Click on the dropdown list and you'll see the different types of cleric the priest could be. Since he's not going to level up though, we can safely leave it as default.

'Alignment' sets the alignment of the character – how good or bad they are, and how Lawful or Chaotic they are. For our priest, we should move the slider over to 'Good' and 'Lawful'.

Statistics

A whole tab devoted to character statistics!:

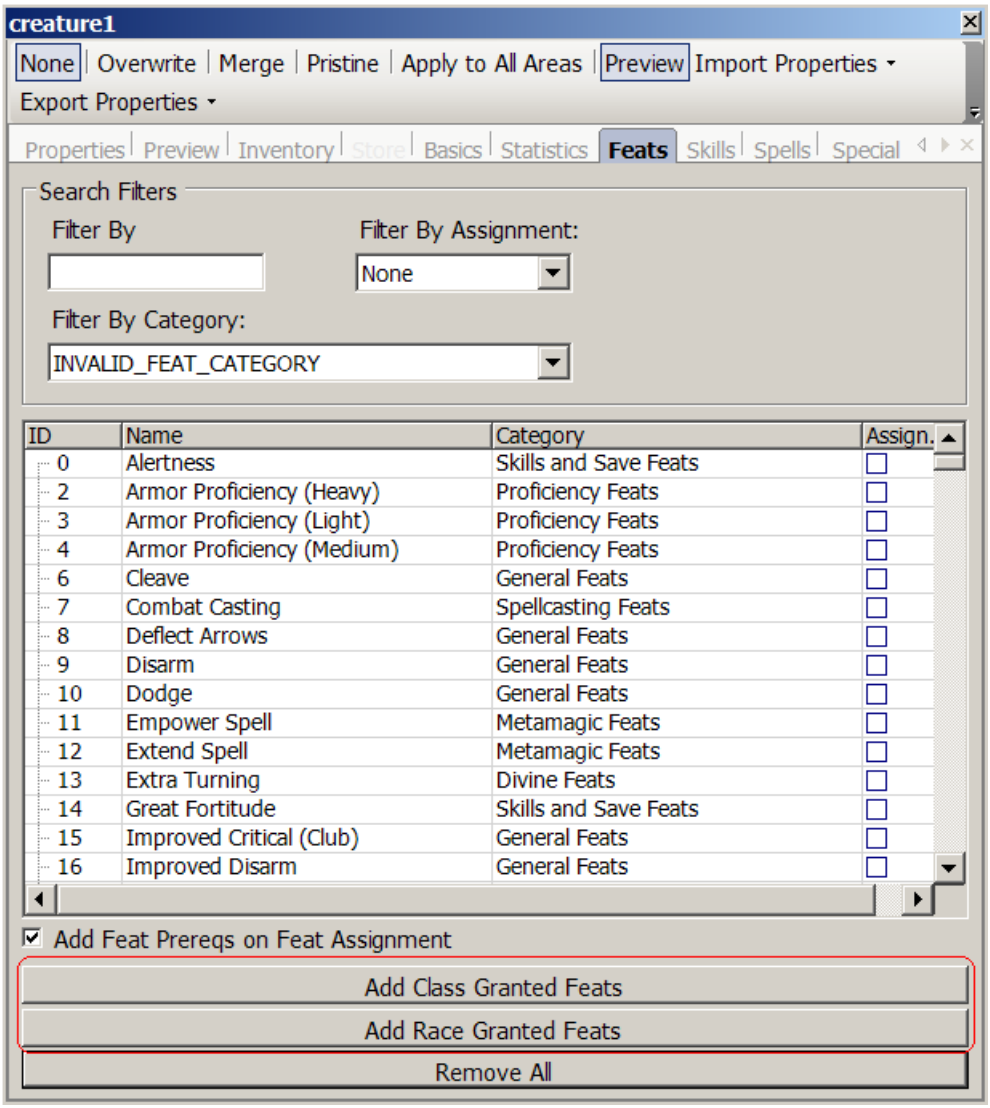


Of course, they're all repeats (with the exception of 'Saving Throws'), but again, you may find it more user-friendly to enter them this way. You can see the ability scores I gave to the priest here.

'Saving Throws' affect whether the character resists the player's spells (among other events). I'm happy to always leave saving throws on their defaults.

Feats

The next tab along is 'Feats'. Again, this really only comes into play if the character ends up in a fight:



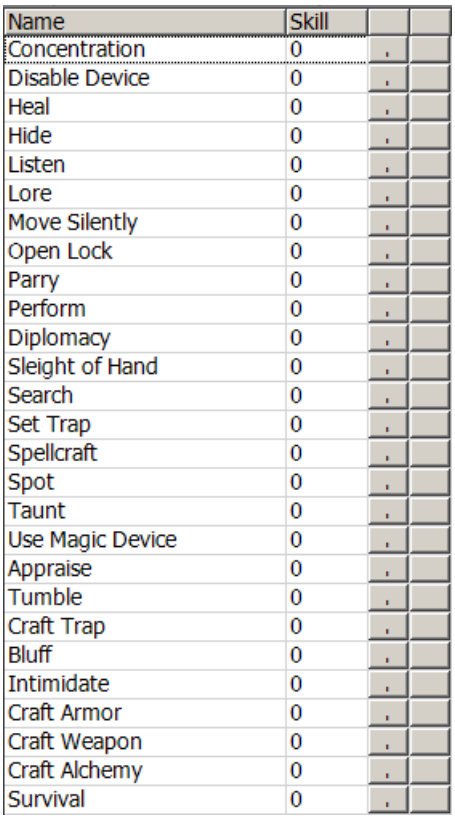
There are many, many available feats. They should be familiar from when you have to choose them for your character in the campaign.

Luckily, there are two magic buttons: 'Add Class Granted Feats' and 'Add Race Granted Feats'. If you click on these two buttons, the character should be set up correctly for you! You can still fine tune the character's feats afterwards if you like.

'Add Feat Prereqs' should be left ticked.

Skills

The next tab is skills. This is another one that you don't really have to bother with for friendly characters that probably won't get into a fight (or join the player's party):

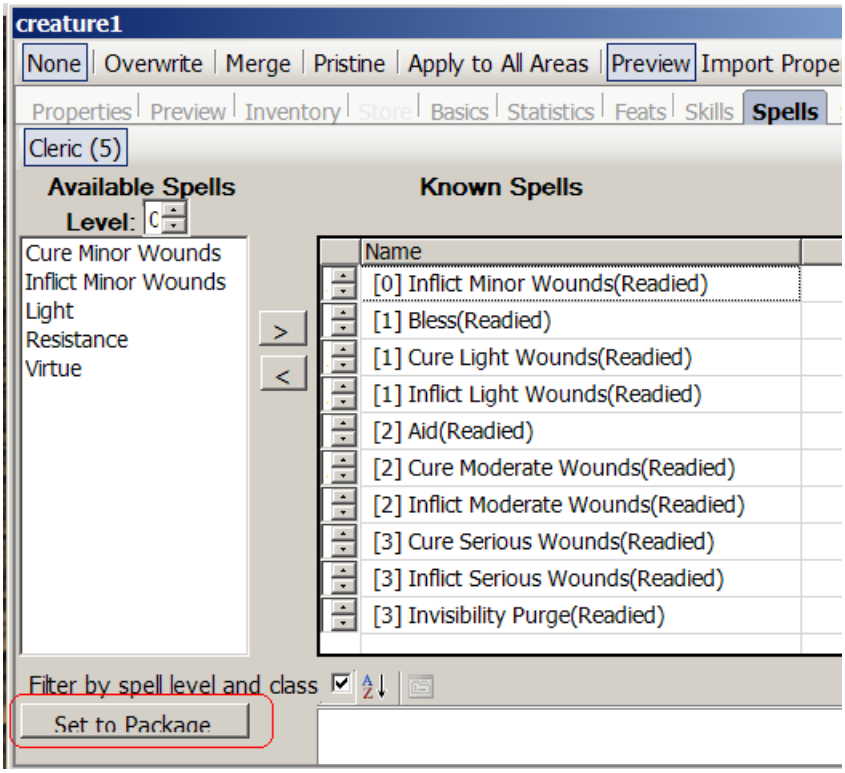


Name	Skill		
Concentration	0	.	
Disable Device	0	.	
Heal	0	.	
Hide	0	.	
Listen	0	.	
Lore	0	.	
Move Silently	0	.	
Open Lock	0	.	
Parry	0	.	
Perform	0	.	
Diplomacy	0	.	
Sleight of Hand	0	.	
Search	0	.	
Set Trap	0	.	
Spellcraft	0	.	
Spot	0	.	
Taunt	0	.	
Use Magic Device	0	.	
Appraise	0	.	
Tumble	0	.	
Craft Trap	0	.	
Bluff	0	.	
Intimidate	0	.	
Craft Armor	0	.	
Craft Weapon	0	.	
Craft Alchemy	0	.	
Survival	0	.	

Each of these skills should be explained in the manual. If you want to set the skills, just change the zeros to the level of the skill you want to give that character. After playing for a while, you should get an idea of character level-appropriate skill levels.

Spells

The spells tab is next (and we're getting very close to the end of the tabs!):

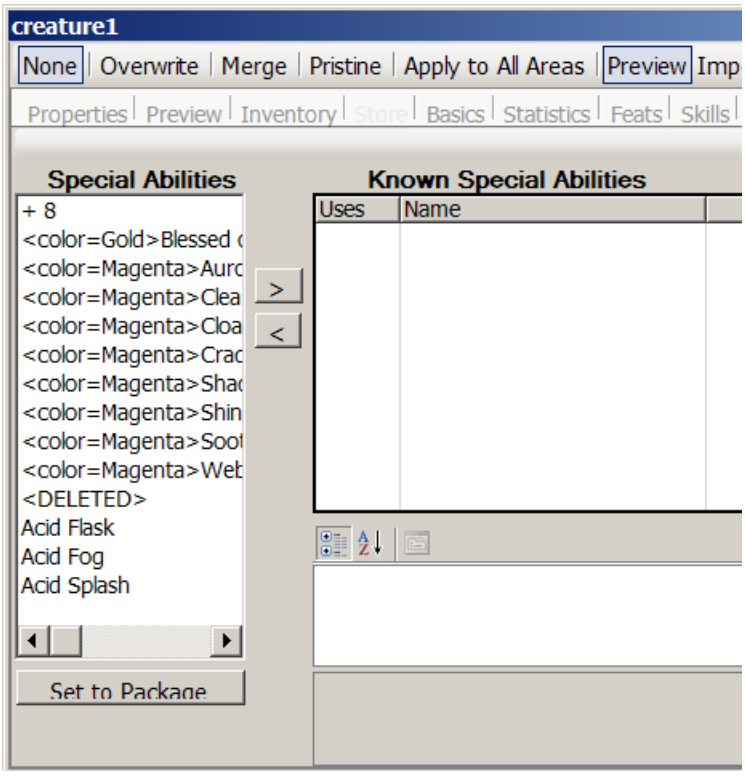


Similar to feats, you can fine tune what spells the character has by choosing a spell level on the left, selecting a spell from the list that appears, and then clicking the '>' arrow to move it into the 'Known Spells' tab.

However, you can also click on the 'Set to Package' button which will configure the spells appropriately for that character (the 'Package' is the type of cleric you selected earlier under the 'Starting' tab in 'Basics'). This is the quickest and easiest way to set spells, and ensures that the spells chosen are appropriate.

Last tab...!

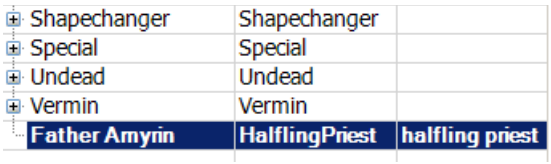
Special Abilities



This tab looks similar to the 'Spells' tab – you can see a range of special abilities in the box. If you want to add a special ability to your character, select it from the left and click the '>' arrow.

Again, there is a 'Set to Package' button which should give you appropriate special abilities for the character. For the halfling priest, this did not add any – perhaps just because the halfling priest wasn't supposed to have any special abilities. I'm going to leave him without any special abilities.

And we're done with the character's properties! If you look back a the blueprints tab, you'll now see an entry that is far more informative than the original 'creature1':



So let's go ahead and place him down in our church:

Congratulations! You've created a custom character that will make your adventure more unique and interesting.

Of course, there are always conversations to write and scripts to add for their behaviour, but this is an excellent start.

Further help

I hope to expand this guide as my experience with the toolset grows. But for now, the goal is simply to build your confidence enough to play around in the toolset and move on to other, more detailed tutorials.

A good start is the documentation that came with the toolset. You'll find it in the 'Documents' folder in the folder where you chose to install the toolset.

And remember the Neverwinter Nights forum:

http://nwn2forums.bioware.com/forums/viewforum.html?forum=100

Where other tutorials and questions and answers are posted.

Also, a number of excellent sites have come up to provide help and guidance with the toolset. Take some time to look at these sites:

Slappy's Toolset FAQ: http://toolsetfaq.com/faq/

NWNMaster's Neverwinter Nights 2 Toolset site: http://www.nwn2.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/

'Neverwinter Nights 2 Toolset and You!' site by Jecrell:

http://alventyr.com/forum/viewtopic.php?p=3615#3615

The Beta Community's tips and tricks guide, organised by the Grinning Fool:

http://www.nwn2source.net/docs/ToolsetCommunityGuide_v4.pdf

NWVault's list of NWN2 toolset tutorials:

http://nwvault.ign.com/View.php?view=nwn2tutorials.list&show_days_back=10

Jassper's site: http://www.jassper.com/

Happy building!

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